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## SELECT READINGS





SELECT READINGS  
FROM ENGLISH PROSE

REVISED EDITION

PUBLISHED BY THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA  
1940

PRINTED IN INDIA

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY BHUPENDRALAL BANERJEE  
AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS, SENATE HOUSE CALCUTTA

1285BT—Feb., 1940—E

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# SELECT READINGS FROM ENGLISH PROSE

## GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

### ADVENTURES IN BROBDINGNAG

The frequent labours I underwent every day made in a few weeks a very considerable change in my health: the more my master got by me, the more insatiable he grew. I had quite lost my stomach, and was almost reduced to a skeleton. The farmer observed it, and concluding I soon must die, resolved to make as good a hand of me as he could. While he was thus reasoning and resolving with himself, a *Slardral*, or Gentleman Usher, came from court, commanding my master to carry me immediately thither for the diversion of the Queen and her ladies. Some of the latter had already been to see me, and reported strange things of my beauty, behaviour, and good sense. Her Majesty \* and those who attended her were beyond measure delighted with my demeanour. I fell on my knees, and begged the

\* The Queen of Brobdingnag.



honour of kissing her Imperial foot; but this gracious princess held out her little finger towards me (after I was set on a table) which I embraced in both my arms, and put the tip of it, with the utmost respect, to my lip. She made me some general questions about my country and my travels, which I answered as distinctly and in as few words as I could. She asked whether I would be content to live at court. I bowed down to the board of the table, and humbly answered, that I was my master's slave, but if I were at my own disposal, I should be proud to devote my life to her Majesty's service. She then asked my master whether he were willing to sell me at a good price. He, who apprehended I could not live a month, was ready enough to part with me, and demanded a thousand pieces of gold, which were ordered him on the spot, each piece being about the bigness of eight hundred moidores; but, allowing for the proportion of all things between that country and Europe, and the high price of gold among them, was hardly so great a sum as a thousand guineas would be in England. I then said to the Queen, since I was now her Majesty's most humble creature and vassal, I must beg the favour, that Glumdalclitch, who had always tended me with so much care and kindness, and understood to do it so well, might be admitted into her service, and continue to be my nurse and instructor. Her Majesty agreed to my petition, and easily got the farmer's consent, who was glad enough to have his daughter preferred at court: and the poor girl herself was not able to hide her joy. My late master withdrew, bidding me farewell, and saying he had left me

in a good service; to which I replied not a word, only making him a slight bow.

The Queen observed my coldness, and when the farmer was gone out of the apartment, asked me the reason. I made bold to tell her Majesty that I owed no other obligation to my late master, than his not dashing out the brains of a poor harmless creature found by chance in his field; which obligation was amply recompensed by the gain he had made in showing me through half the kingdom, and the price he had now sold me for. That the life I had since led, was laborious enough to kill an animal of ten times my strength. That my health was much impaired by the continual drudgery of entertaining the rabble every hour of the day, and that if my master had not thought my life in danger, her Majesty perhaps would not have got so cheap a bargain. But as I was out of all fear of being ill treated under the protection of so great and good an Empress, the Ornament of Nature, the Darling of the World, the Delight of her Subjects, the Phoenix of the Creation; so I hoped my late master's apprehensions would appear to be groundless, for I already found my spirits to revive by the influence of her most august presence.

This was the sum of my speech, delivered with great improprieties and hesitation; the latter part was altogether framed in the style peculiar to that people, whereof I learned some phrases from Glumdalclitch, while she was carrying me to court.

The Queen giving great allowance for my defectiveness in speaking, was however surprised at so

much wit and good sense in so diminutive an animal. She took me in her own hand, and carried me to the King, who was then retired to his cabinet. His Majesty, a prince of much gravity, and austere countenance, not well observing my shape at first view, asked the Queen after a cold manner, how long it was since she grew fond of a *splacknuck*; for such it seems he took me to be, as I lay upon my breast in her Majesty's right hand. But this princess, who hath an infinite deal of wit and humour, set me gently on my feet upon the scrutore, and commanded me to give his Majesty an account of myself, which I did in a very few words; and Glumdalclitch, who attended at the cabinet door, and could not endure I should be out of her sight, being admitted, confirmed all that had passed from my arrival at her father's house.

The King, although he be as learned a person as any in his dominions, and had been educated in the study of philosophy, and particularly mathematics; yet when he observed my shape exactly, and saw me walk erect, before I began to speak, conceived I might be a piece of clock-work, (which is in that country arrived to a very great perfection) contrived by some ingenious artist. But when he heard my voice, and found what I delivered to be regular and rational, he could not conceal his astonishment. He was by no means satisfied with the relation I gave him of the manner I came into his kingdom, but thought it a story concerted between Glumdalclitch and her father, who had taught me a set of words to make me sell at a higher price. Upon this imagination he

put several other questions to me, and still received rational answers, no otherwise defective than by a foreign accent, and an imperfect knowledge in the language, with some rustic phrases which I had learned at the farmer's house, and did not suit the polite style of a court.

His Majesty sent for three great scholars who were then in their weekly waiting, according to the custom in that country. These gentlemen, after they had a while examined my shape with much nicety, were of different opinions concerning me. They all agreed that I could not be produced according to the regular laws of nature, because I was not framed with a capacity of preserving my life, either by swiftness, or climbing of trees, or digging holes in the earth. They observed by my teeth, which they viewed with great exactness, that I was a carnivorous animal; yet most quadrupeds being an overmatch for me, and field mice, with some others, too nimble, they could not imagine how I should be able to support myself, unless I fed upon snails and other insects, which they offered, by many learned arguments, to evince that I could not possibly do. One of these virtuosi seemed to think that I might be an embryo, or abortive birth. But this opinion was rejected by the other two, who observed my limbs to be perfect and finished, and that I had lived several years, as it was manifest from my beard, the stumps whereof they plainly discovered through a magnifying-glass. They would not allow me to be a dwarf, because my littleness was beyond all degrees of comparison; for the Queen's favourite

dwarf, the smallest ever known in that kingdom, was near thirty foot high. After much debate, they concluded unanimously that I was only *relplum scalcath*, which is interpreted literally, *lusus naturæ*; a determination exactly agreeable to the modern philosophy of Europe, whose professors, disdaining the old evasion of *occult causes*, whereby the followers of Aristotle endeavour in vain to disguise their ignorance, have invented this wonderful solution of all difficulties, to the unspeakable advancement of human knowledge.

After this decisive conclusion, I entreated to be heard a word or two. I applied myself to the King, and assured his Majesty, that I came from a country which abounded with several millions of both sexes, and of my own stature; where the animals, trees, and houses were all in proportion, and where by consequence I might be as able to defend myself, and to find sustenance, as any of his Majesty's subjects could do here; which I took for a full answer to those gentlemen's arguments. To this they only replied with a smile of contempt, saying, that the farmer had instructed me very well in my lesson. The King, who had a much better understanding, dismissing his learned men, sent for the farmer, who by good fortune was not yet gone out of town. Having therefore first examined him privately, and then confronted him with me and the young girl, his Majesty began to think that what we told him might possibly be true. He desired the Queen to order that a particular care should be taken of me, and was of opinion that Glumdalclitch should still continue in

her office of tending me, because he observed we had a great affection for each other. A convenient apartment was provided for her at court: she had a sort of governess appointed to take care of her education, a maid to dress her, and two other servants for menial offices; but the care of me was wholly appropriated to herself. The Queen commanded her own cabinet-maker to contrive a box that might serve me for a bed-chamber, after the model that Glumdaleclitch and I should agree upon. This man was a most ingenious artist, and according to my directions, in three weeks finished for me a wooden chamber of sixteen foot square, and twelve high, with sash-windows, a door, and two closets, like a London bed-chamber. The board that made the ceiling was to be lifted up and down by two hinges, to put in a bed ready furnished by her Majesty's upholsterer, which Glumdaleclitch took out every day to air, made it with her own hands, and letting it down at night, locked up the roof over me. A nice workman, who was famous for little curiosities, undertook to make me two chairs, with backs and frames, of a substance not unlike ivory, and two tables, with a cabinet to put my things in. The room was quilted on all sides, as well as the floor and the ceiling, to prevent any accident from the carelessness of those who carried me, and to break the force of a jolt when I went in a coach. I desired a lock for my door, to prevent rats and mice from coming in: the smith, after several attempts, made the smallest that ever was seen among them, for I have known a larger at the gate of a gentleman's house in England. I made a shift to

keep the key in a pocket of my own, fearing Glumdalclitch might lose it. The Queen likewise ordered the thinnest silks that could be gotten, to make me clothes, not much thicker than an English blanket, very cumbersome till I was accustomed to them. They were after the fashion of the kingdom, partly resembling the Persian, and partly the Chinese, and are a very grave and decent habit.

The Queen became so fond of my company, that she could not dine without me. I had a table placed upon the same at which her Majesty ate, just at her left elbow, and a chair to sit on. Glumdalclitch stood upon a stool on the floor, near my table, to assist and take care of me. I had an entire set of silver dishes and plates, and other necessities, which, in proportion to those of the Queen, were not much bigger than what I have seen of the same kind in a London toy-shop, for the furniture of a baby-house: these my little nurse kept in her pocket, in a silver box, and gave me at meals as I wanted them, always cleaning them herself. No person dined with the Queen but the two Princesses Royal, the elder sixteen years old, and the younger at that time thirteen and a month. Her Majesty used to put a bit of meat upon one of my dishes, out of which I carved for myself, and her diversion was to see me eat in miniature. For the Queen (who had indeed but a weak stomach) took up at one mouthful, as much as a dozen English farmers could eat at a meal, which to me was for some time a very nauseous sight. She would craunch the wing of a lark, bones and all, between her teeth, although it were nine times as large as that of a full-

grown turkey; and put a bit of bread into her mouth, as big as two twelve-penny loaves. She drank out of a golden cup, above a hogshead at a draught. Her knives were twice as long as a scythe set straight upon the handle. The spoons, forks, and other instruments were all in the same proportion. I remember when Glumdalclitch carried me out of curiosity to see some of the tables at court, where ten or a dozen of these enormous knives and forks were lifted up together, I thought I had never till then beheld so terrible a sight.

It is the custom that every Wednesday (which, as I have before observed, was their Sabbath) the King and Queen, with the royal issue of both sexes, dine together in the apartment of his Majesty, to whom I was now become a great favourite; and at these times my little chair and table were placed at his left hand, before one of the salt-cellars. This prince took a pleasure in conversing with me, enquiring into the manners, religion, laws, government, and learning of Europe; wherein I gave him the best account I was able. His apprehension was so clear, and his judgment so exact, that he made very wise reflections and observations upon all I said. But, I confess, that after I had been a little too copious in talking of my own beloved country, of our trade, and wars by sea and land, of our schisms in religion, and parties in the state; the prejudices of his education prevailed so far, that he could not forbear taking me up in his right hand, and stroking me gently with the other, after an hearty fit of laughing, asked me, whether I were a Whig or a Tory.



Then turning to his first minister, who waited behind him with a white staff, near as tall as the mainmast of the *Royal Sovereign*, he observed how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I: and yet, said he, I dare engage, these creatures have their titles and distinctions of honour, they contrive little nests and burrows, that they call houses and cities; they make a figure in dress and equipage; they love, they fight, they dispute, they cheat, they betray. And thus he continued on, while my colour came and went several times, with indignation to hear our noble country, the mistress of arts and arms, the scourge of France, the arbitress of Europe, the seat of virtue, piety, honour and truth, the pride and envy of the world, so contemptuously treated.

But as I was not in a condition to resent injuries, so, upon mature thoughts, I began to doubt whether I were injured or no. For, after having been accustomed several months to the sight and converse of this people, and observed every object upon which I cast my eyes, to be of proportionable magnitude, the horror I had first conceived from their bulk and aspect was so far worn off, that if I had then beheld a company of English lords and ladies in their finery and birth-day clothes, acting their several parts in the most courtly manner, of strutting, and bowing, and prating; to say the truth, I should have been strongly tempted to laugh as much at them as the King and his grantees did at me. Neither indeed could I forbear smiling at myself, when the Queen used to place me upon her hand towards a looking-glass, by

which both our persons appeared before me in full view together; and there could be nothing more ridiculous than the comparison; so that I really began to imagine myself dwindled many degrees below my usual size.

Nothing angered and mortified me so much as the Queen's dwarf, who being of the lowest stature that was ever in that country (for I verily think he was not full thirty foot high) became insolent at seeing a creature so much beneath him, that he would always affect to swagger and look big as he passed by me in the Queen's antechamber, while I was standing on some table talking with the lords or ladies of the court, and he seldom failed of a smart word or two upon my littleness; against which I could only revenge myself by calling him brother, challenging him to wrestle, and such repartees as are usual in the mouths of court pages. One day at dinner this malicious little cub was so nettled with something I had said to him, that raising himself upon the frame of her Majesty's chair, he took me up by the middle, as I was sitting down, not thinking any harm, and let me drop into a large silver bowl of cream, and then ran away as fast as he could. I fell over head and ears, and if I had not been a good swimmer, it might have gone very hard with me; for Glumdalclitch in that instant happened to be at the other end of the room, and the Queen was in such a fright that she wanted presence of mind to assist me. But my little nurse ran to my relief, and took me out, after I had swallowed above a quart of cream. I was put to bed; however I received no

other damage than the loss of a suit of clothes, which was utterly spoiled. The dwarf was soundly whipped, and as a farther punishment, forced to drink up the bowl of cream, into which he had thrown me: neither was he ever restored to favour: for, soon after the Queen bestowed him on a lady of high quality, so that I saw him no more, to my very great satisfaction; for I could not tell to what extremity such a malicious urchin might have carried his resentment.

He had before served me a scurvy trick, which set the Queen a-laughing, although at the same time she was heartily vexed, and would have immediately cashiered him, if I had not been so generous as to intercede. Her Majesty had taken a marrow-bone upon her plate, and after knocking out the marrow, placed the bone again in the dish erect as it stood before; the dwarf watching his opportunity, while Glumdalclitch was gone to the sideboard, mounted the stool she stood on to take care of me at meals, took me up in both hands, and squeezing my legs together, wedged them into the marrow-bone above my waist, where I stuck for some time, and made a very ridiculous figure. I believe it was near a minute before any one knew what was become of me, for I thought it below me to cry out. But, as princes seldom get their meat hot, my legs were not scalded, only my stockings and breeches in a sad condition. The dwarf, at my entreaty, had no other punishment than a sound whipping.

I was frequently rallied by the Queen upon account of my fearfulness, and she used to ask me

whether the people of my country were as great cowards as myself. The occasion was this: the kingdom is much pestered with flies in summer; and these odious insects, each of them as big as a Dunstable lark, hardly gave me any rest while I sat at dinner, with their continual humming and buzzing about my ears. They would sometimes alight upon my victuals, and leave their loathsome excrement or spawn behind, which to me was very visible, though not to the natives of that country, whose large optics were not so acute as mine in viewing smaller objects. Sometimes they would fix upon my nose or forehead, where they stung me to the quick, smelling very offensively, and I could easily trace that viscous matter, which our naturalists tell us enables those creatures to walk with their feet upwards upon a ceiling. I had much ado to defend myself against these detestable animals, and could not forbear starting when they came on my face. It was the common practice of the dwarf to catch a number of these insects in his hand, as school boys do among us, and let them out suddenly under my nose, on purpose to frighten me, and divert the Queen. My remedy was to cut them in pieces with my knife as they flew in the air, wherein my dexterity was much admired.

I remember one morning when Glumdalclitch had set me in my box upon a window, as she usually did in fair days to give me air (for I durst not venture to let the box be hung on a nail out of the window, as we do with cages in England) after I had lifted up one of my sashes, and sat down at my table to

eat a piece of sweet cake for my breakfast, above twenty wasps, allured by the smell, came flying into the room, humming louder than the drones of as many bagpipes. Some of them seized my cake, and carried it piecemeal away, others flew about my head and face, confounding me with the noise, and putting me in the utmost terror of their stings. However I had the courage to rise and draw my hanger, and attack them in the air. I dispatched four of them, but the rest got away, and I presently shut my window. These insects were as large as partridges: I took out their stings, found them an inch and a half long, and as sharp as needles. I carefully preserved them all, and having since shown them with some other curiosities in several parts of Europe; upon my return to England I gave three of them to Gresham College, and kept the fourth for myself.

*Jonathan Swift*

## CHESTERFIELD'S LETTER TO HIS SON

*London, Jan. 10, o.s. 1749.*

DEAR BOY,

I have received your letter of the 31st December, N.S. Your thanks for my present, as you call it, exceed the value of the present; but the use which you assure me that you will make of it, is the thanks which I desire to receive. Due attention to the inside of books, and due contempt for the outside, is the proper relation between a man of sense and his books.

Now that you are going a little more into the world, I will take this occasion to explain my intentions as to your future expenses, that you may know what you have to expect from me, and make your plan accordingly. I shall neither deny nor grudge you any money that may be necessary for either your improvement or pleasures; I mean the pleasures of a rational being. Under the head of improvement I mean the best books, and the best masters, cost what they will; I also mean all the expense of lodgings, coach, dress, servants, etc., which, according to the several places where you may be, shall be

respectively necessary to enable you to keep the best company. Under the head of rational pleasures I comprehend, first, proper charities to real and compassionate objects of it; secondly, proper presents to those to whom you are obliged, or whom you desire to oblige; thirdly, a conformity of expense to that of the company which you keep; as in public spectacles, your share of little entertainments, a few pistoles at games of mere commerce, and other incidental calls of good company. The only two articles which I will never supply are, the profusion of low riot and the idle lavishness of negligence and laziness. A fool squanders away, without credit or advantage to himself, more than a man of sense spends with both. The latter employs his money as he does his time, and never spends a shilling of the one, nor a minute of the other, but in something that is either useful or rationally pleasing to himself or others. The former buys whatever he does not want, and does not pay for what he does want. He cannot withstand the charms of a toy-shop; snuff-boxes, watches, heads of canes, etc., are his destruction. His servants and tradesmen conspire with his own indolence to cheat him, and in a very little time he is astonished, in the midst of all the ridiculous superfluities, to find himself in want of all the real comforts and necessities of life. Without care and method the largest fortune will not, and with them almost the smallest will, supply all necessary expenses. As far as you can possibly, pay ready money for everything you buy, and avoid bills. Pay that money too yourself, and not through the hands of

any servant, who always either stipulates poundage, or requires a present for his good word, as they call it. Where you must have bills, (as for meat and drink, clothes, etc.) pay them regularly every month, and with your own hand. Never, from a mistaken economy, buy a thing you do not want, because it is cheap; or from a silly pride, because it is dear. Keep an account in a book, of all that you receive, and of all that you pay; for no man, who knows what he receives and what he pays, ever runs out. I do not mean that you should keep an account of the shillings and half-crowns which you may spend in chair-hire, operas, etc. They are unworthy of the time, and of the ink that they would consume; leave such *minutiae* to dull, penny-wise fellows; but remember in economy, as well as in every other part of life, to have the proper attention to proper objects, and the proper contempt for little ones. A strong mind sees things in their true proportion; a weak one views them through a magnifying medium, which, like the microscope, makes an elephant of a flea; magnifies all little objects, but cannot receive great ones. I have known many a man pass for a miser, by saving a penny, and wrangling for two-pence, who was undoing himself at the same time, by living above his income, and not attending to essential articles, which were above his *portée*. The sure characteristic of a sound and strong mind is, to find in every thing those certain bounds, *quos ultra citrave nequit consistere rectum*. These boundaries are marked out by a very fine line, which only good sense and attention can discover; it is much too fine for vulgar



eyes. In manners, this line is good-breeding; beyond it, is troublesome ceremony; short of it, is unbecoming negligence and inattention. In morals, it divides ostentatious puritanism from criminal relaxation; in religion, superstition from impiety; and, in short, every virtue from its kindred vice or weakness. I think you have sense enough to discover the line; keep it always in your eye, and learn to walk upon it; rest upon Mr. Harte, and he will poise you, till you are able to go alone. By the way, there are fewer people who walk well upon that line, than upon the slack-rope; and, therefore, a good performer shines so much the more.....

Remember to take the best dancing-master at Berlin, more to teach you to sit, stand, and walk gracefully, than to dance finely. The graces, the graces; remember the graces! Adieu.

*Earl of Chesterfield*

## THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

### LETTER XXVI

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY IN CHINA

Though fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The Man in Black, whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with some strange inconsistencies; and he may be justly termed a humorist in a nation of humorists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence; though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion; and, while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness, others boast of having such dispositions from nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He

takes as much pains to hide his feelings, as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. "In every parish-house," says he, "the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more, I desire no more myself; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious; I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible that it in some measure encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences: let me assure you, sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief."

He was proceeding in this strain, earnestly to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being

prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me; but it was quite otherwise with the Man in Black: I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive, that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him at the same time, in order that I should hear, go work for his bread, and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before: he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar-men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend, looking wistfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor,

demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad, in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment; he had not a single question more to ask; he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches; but not waiting for a reply, desired, in a surly tone, to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollecting himself, and presenting his whole bundle, "Here, master," says he, "take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain."

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase; he assured me, that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match, instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for

some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice, that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who in the deepest distress still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding: his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion, his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her; but guess his confusion when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

## LETTER XXVII

### TO THE SAME

As there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I must own it surprised me what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason.

It was not, however, till after repeated solicitations he thought proper to gratify my curiosity. "If you are fond," says he, "of hearing hairbreadth 'scapes, my history must certainly please; for I have been for twenty years upon the very verge of starving, without ever being starved.

"My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers, still poorer than himself; for every dinner he gave them they returned an equivalent in praise, and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of an army influenced my father at the head of his table: he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars

and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taiffy in the sedan chair was sure to set the table in a roar: thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

“ As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it; he had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he was resolved they should have learning; for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose, he undertook to instruct us himself; and took as much pains to form our morals as to improve our understanding. We were told, that universal benevolence was what first cemented society: we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the human face divine with affection and esteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress: in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.

“ I cannot avoid imagining, that thus refined by his lessons out of all my suspicion, and divested of even all the little cunning which nature had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without armour in the amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however, who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior



discernment; though my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to talk like himself upon subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world, but that now were utterly useless, because connected with the busy world no longer.

“ The first opportunity he had of finding his expectations disappointed was in the very middling figure I made in the university; he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having overrated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This did not, however, please my tutor, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull; but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be very good-natured, and had no harm in me.

“ After I had resided at college seven years, my father died, and left me—his blessing. Thus shoved from shore without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends advised (for they always advise when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

“ To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China; with us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the least harm in him and was so very good-natured.

“ Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first, I was surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought disagreeable: there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself; and from that very moment my power of flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission; to flatter those we do not know is an easy task; but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falsehood went to my conscience; his lordship soon perceived me to be unfit for service; I was therefore discharged; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to

observe, that he believed I was tolerably good-natured, and had not the least harm in me.

“ Disappointed in ambition, I had recourse to love. A young lady, who lived with her aunt, and was possessed of a pretty fortune in her own disposal, had given me, as I fancied, some reason to expect success. The symptoms by which I was guided were striking. She had always laughed with me at her awkward acquaintance, and at her aunt among the number; she always observed, that a man of sense would make a better husband than a fool, and I constantly applied the observation in my own favour. She continually talked, in my company, of friendship and the beauties of the mind, and spoke of Mr. Shrimp my rival’s high-heeled shoes with detestation. These were circumstances which I thought strongly in my favour; so, after resolving and resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miss heard my proposal with serenity, seeming at the same time to study the figures of her fan. Out at last it came. There was but one small objection to complete our happiness, which was no more than—that she was married three months before to Mr. Shrimp, with high-heeled shoes! By way of consolation, however, she observed, that, though I was disappointed in her, my addresses to her aunt would probably kindle her into sensibility, as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the least share of harm in me.

“ Yet still I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was resolved to apply. O friendship! thou fond soother of the human breast, to thee we fly in

every calamity; to thee the wretched seek for succour; on thee the care-tired son of misery fondly relies; from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hopes relief, and may be ever sure of—disappointment. My first application was to a city scrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money, when he knew I did not want it. I informed him, that now was the time to put his friendship to the test; that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundred for a certain occasion, and was resolved to take it up from him. ‘And pray, sir,’ cried my friend, ‘do you want all this money?’—‘Indeed, I never wanted it more,’ returned I.—‘I am sorry for that,’ cried the scrivener, ‘with all my heart; for they who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they should come to pay.’

“From him I flew with indignation, to one of the best friends I had in the world, and made the same request. ‘Indeed Mr. Drybone,’ cried my friend, ‘I always thought it would come to this. You know, sir, I would not advise you but for your own good; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the highest degree, and some of your acquaintance always thought you a very silly fellow. Let me see—you want two hundred pounds. Do you only want two hundred, sir, exactly?’—‘To confess a truth,’ returned I, ‘I shall want three hundred; but then, I have another friend, from whom I can borrow the rest.’—‘Why, then,’ replied my friend, ‘if you would take my advice (and you know I should not presume to advise you but for your own good), I would recommend it to you to borrow the whole sum

from that other friend; and then one note will serve for all, you know.'

"Poverty now began to come fast upon me; yet instead of growing more provident or cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and simple. A friend was arrested for fifty pounds; I was unable to extricate him, except by becoming his bail. When at liberty, he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In prison I expected greater satisfaction than I enjoyed at large. I hoped to converse with men in this new world, simple and believing like myself; but I found them as cunning and as cautious as those in the world I had left behind. They spunged up my money while it lasted, borrowed my coals and never paid for them, and cheated me when I played at cribbage. All this was done because they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

"Upon my first entrance into this mansion, which is to some the abode of despair, I felt no sensations different from those I experienced abroad. I was now on one side the door, and those who were unconfined were on the other: this was all the difference between us. At first, indeed, I felt some uneasiness, in considering how I should be able to provide this week for the wants of the week ensuing; but after some time, if I found myself sure of eating one day, I never troubled my head how I was to be supplied another. I seized every precarious meal with the utmost good-humour; indulged no rants of spleen at my situation; never called down heaven and all the stars to behold me dining upon a half-penny-

worth of radishes; my very companions were taught to believe that I liked salad better than mutton. I contented myself with thinking, that all my life I should either eat white bread or brown; considered that all that happened was best; laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often for want of more books and company.

“ How long I might have continued in this torpid state of simplicity I cannot tell, had I not been roused by seeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead, preferred to a place in the Government. I now found that I had pursued a wrong track, and that the true way of being able to relieve others was first to aim at independence myself: my immediate care, therefore, was to leave my present habitation and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour. For a free, open, undesigning deportment, I put on that of closeness, prudence, and economy. One of the most heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I shall praise myself as long as I live, was the refusing half-a-crown to an old acquaintance, at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to spare: for this alone I deserved to be decreed an ovation.

“ I now therefore pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was consequently invited to twenty. I soon began to get the character of a saving hunk that had money, and insensibly grew into esteem. Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters; and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendship with an alderman, only by

observing, that if we take a farthing from a thousand pounds, it will be a thousand pounds no longer. I have been invited to a pawnbroker's table, by pretending to hate gravy; and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having observed that the bread was rising. If ever I am asked a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived by never relieving. In short, I now find the truest way of finding esteem, even from the indigent, is to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give."

*Oliver Goldsmith*

## COWPER'S LETTERS

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

*August 21, 1780*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The following occurrence ought not to be passed over in silence, in a place where so few notable ones are to be met with. Last Wednesday night, while we were at supper, between the hours of eight and nine, I heard an unusual noise in the back-parlour, as if one of the hares was entangled, and endeavouring to disengage herself. I was just going to rise from table when it ceased. In about five minutes, a voice on the outside of the parlour door inquired if one of my hares had got away. I immediately rushed into the next room, and found that my poor favourite puss had made her escape. She had gnawed in sunder the strings of a lattice work, with which I thought I had sufficiently secured the window, and which I preferred to any other sort of blind, because it admitted plenty of air. From thence I hastened to the kitchen, where I saw the redoubtable Thomas Freeman, who told me, that having seen her, just after she dropped into the street, he attempted to cover her with his hat, but she screamed out, and leaped directly over his head. I then desired him to pursue as fast as possible, and added Richard Coleman to the chase, as being nimbler, and carrying less weight, than Thomas; not expecting to see her again, but desirous to learn, if possible, what became of her. In something less than an hour, Richard returned, almost breathless, with the following account. That soon after he began to run, he left



Tom behind him, and came in sight of a most numerous hunt, of men, women, children, and dogs; that he did his best to keep back the dogs, and presently outstripped the crowd, so that the race was at last disputed between himself and puss—she ran right through the town, and down the lane that leads to Dropshort—a little before she came to the house, he got the start and turned her; she pushed for the town again and soon after she entered it, sought shelter in Mr. Wagstaff's tan-yard, adjoining to old Mr. Drake's—Sturges's harvest-men were at supper, and saw her from the opposite side of the way. There she encountered the tan-pits full of water, and while she was struggling out of one pit, and plunging into another, and almost drowned, one of the men drew her out by the ears and secured her. She was then well washed in a bucket, to get the lime out of her coat, and brought home in a sack, at ten o'clock.

This frolic cost us four shillings, but you may believe we did not grudge a farthing of it. The poor creature received only a little hurt in one of her claws, and in one of her ears, and is now almost as well as ever.

I do not call this answer to your letter, but such as it is, I send it, presuming upon that interest, which I know you take in my minutest concerns.

Yours, my dear friend,  
W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is hard upon us striplings, who have uncles still living (*N.B.* I myself have an uncle still alive) that those venerable gentlemen should stand in our way, even when the ladies are in question; that I, for instance, should find in one page of your letter a hope, that Miss Shuttleworth would be of your party, and be told in the next, that she is engaged to your uncle. Well we may perhaps never be uncles, but we may reasonably hope that the time is coming, when others, as young as we are now, shall envy us the privileges of old age and see us engross that share in the attention of the ladies, to which their youth must aspire in vain. Make our compliments if you please to your sister Eliza, and tell her that we are both mortified at having missed the pleasure of seeing her.

Balloons are so much the mode, that even in this country we have attempted a balloon. You may possibly remember, that at a place called Weston, a little more than a mile from Olney, there lives a family, whose name is Throckmorton. The present possessor is a young man, whom I remember a boy. He has a wife, who is young, genteel, and handsome. They are Papists, but much more amiable than many Protestants. We never had any intercourse with the

family, though ever since we lived here we have enjoyed the range of their pleasure grounds, having been favoured with a key, which admits us into all. When this man succeeded to the estate, on the death of his elder brother, and came to settle at Weston, I sent him a complimentary card, requesting the continuance of that privilege, having till then enjoyed it by favour of his mother, who on that occasion went to finish her days at Bath. You may conclude that he granted it, and for about two years nothing more passed between us. A fortnight ago, I received an invitation in the civilest terms, in which he told me, that the next day he should attempt to fill a balloon, and if it would be any pleasure to me to be present, he should be happy to see me. Your mother and I went. The whole country were there, but the balloon could not be filled. The endeavour was, I believe, very philosophically made, but such a process depends for its success upon such niceties as make it very precarious. Our reception was however flattering to a great degree, insomuch that more notice seemed to be taken of us, than we could possibly have expected, indeed rather more than any of his other guests. They even seemed anxious to recommend themselves to our regards. We drank chocolate, and were asked to dine, but were engaged. A day or two afterwards, Mrs. Unwin and I walked that way, and were overtaken in a shower. I found a tree, that I thought would shelter us both, a large elm, in a grove, that fronts the mansion. Mrs. T. observed us, and running towards us in the rain, insisted on our walking in. He was gone out. We

sat chatting with her till the weather cleared up, and then at her instance took a walk with her in the garden. The garden is almost their only walk, and is certainly their only retreat, in which they are not liable to interruption. She offered us a key of it, in a manner, that made it impossible not to accept it, and said she would send us one; a few days afterwards in the cool of the evening, we walked that way again. We saw them going towards the house and exchanged bows, and courtesies at a distance, but did not join them. In a few minutes, when we had passed the house, and had almost reached the gate that opens out of the park into the adjoining field, I heard the iron gate belonging to the courtyard ring, and saw Mr. T. advancing hastily towards us. We made equal haste to meet him, he presented to us the key, which I told him I esteemed a singular favour, and after a few such speeches as are made on such occasions, we parted. This happened about a week ago. I concluded nothing less than that all this civility and attention was designed, on their part, as a prelude to a nearer acquaintance; but here at present the matter rests. I should like exceedingly to be on an easy footing there, to give a morning call now and then, and to receive one, but nothing more. For though he is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, I could not wish to visit him in any other way; neither our house, furniture, servants, or income, being such as qualify us to make entertainments, neither would I on any account be introduced to the neighbouring gentry. Mr. T. is altogether a man of fashion, and respectable on every account.

I have told you a long story. Farewell. We number the days as they pass, and are glad that we shall see you and your sister soon.

Yours, etc.,  
W. C.

## ADVENTURES OF ROBERT BRUCE

(FROM "TALES OF A GRANDFATHER")

At one time, a near relation of Bruce's, in whom he entirely confided, was induced by the bribes of the English to attempt to put him to death. This villain, with his two sons, watched the King one morning, till he saw him separated from all his men, excepting a little boy, who waited on him as a page. The father had a sword in his hand, one of the sons had a sword and a spear, the other had a sword and a battle-axe. Now, when the King saw them so well armed when there were no enemies near, he began to call to mind some hints which had been given to him, that these men intended to murder him. He had no weapons excepting his sword; but his page had a bow and arrow. He took them both from the little boy, and bade him stand at a distance; "for," said the King, "if I overcome these traitors, thou shalt have enough of weapons; but if I am slain by them, you may make your escape, and tell Douglas and my brother to revenge my death." The boy was very sorry, for he loved his master; but he was obliged to do as he was bidden.

In the meantime the traitors came forward upon Bruce, that they might assault him at once. The King called out to them, and commanded them to come no nearer, upon peril of their lives; but the father answered with flattering words, pretending great kindness, and still continuing to approach his person. Then the King again called to them to stand. "Traitors," said he, "ye have sold my life for English gold; but you shall die if you come one foot nearer to me." With that he bent the page's bow; and as the old conspirator continued to advance, he let the arrow fly at him. Bruce was an excellent archer; he aimed his arrow so well, that it hit the father in the eye, and penetrated into his brain, so that he fell down dead. Then the two sons rushed on the King. One of them fetched a blow at him with an axe, but missed his stroke, and stumbled, so that the King with his great sword cut him down before he could recover his feet. The remaining traitor ran on Bruce with his spear; but the King, with a sweep of his sword, cut the steel head of the villain's weapon, and then killed him before he had time to draw his sword. Then the little page came running, very joyful of his master's victory; and the King wiped his bloody sword, and looking upon the dead bodies, said, "These might have been reputed three gallant men, if they could have resisted the temptation of covetousness."

In the present day, it is not necessary that generals, or great officers, should fight with their own hand, because it is only their duty to direct the movements and exertions of their followers. The artillery

and the soldiers shoot at the enemy; and men seldom mingle together, and fight hand to hand. But in ancient times, kings and great lords were obliged to put themselves into the very front of the battle, and fight like ordinary men, with the lance and other weapons. It was, therefore, of great consequence that they should be strong men, and dexterous in the use of their arms. Robert Bruce was so remarkably active and powerful that he came through a great many personal dangers, in which he must otherwise have been slain. I will tell you another of his adventures, which I think will amuse you.

After the death of the three traitors, Robert the Bruce continued to keep himself concealed in his own earldom of Carrick, and in the neighbouring country of Galloway, until he should have matters ready for a general attack upon the English. He was obliged, in the meantime, to keep very few men with him, both for the sake of secrecy, and from the difficulty of finding provisions. Now, many of the people of Galloway were unfriendly to Bruce. They lived under the government of one M'Dougal, related to the Lord of Lorn, who, as I before told you, had defeated Bruce at Dalry, and very nearly killed or made him prisoner. These Galloway men had heard that Bruce was in their country, having no more than sixty men with him; so they resolved to attack him by surprise, and for this purpose they got two hundred men together, and brought with them two or three bloodhounds. These animals were trained to chase a man by the scent of his footsteps, as foxhounds chase a fox, or as beagles and harriers chase a hare.



Although the dog does not see the person whose trace he is put upon, he follows him over every step he has taken. At that time these bloodhounds, or sleuthhounds (so called from *slot*, or *sleut*, a word which signifies the scent left by an animal of chase), were used for the purpose of pursuing great criminals. The men of Galloway thought themselves secure, that if they missed taking Bruce, or killing him at the first onset, and if he should escape into the woods, they would find him out by means of these bloodhounds.

The good King Robert Bruce, who was always watchful and vigilant, had received some information of the intention of this party to come upon him suddenly and by night. Accordingly, he quartered his little troop of sixty men on the side of a deep and swift-running river, that had very steep and rocky banks. There was but one ford by which this river could be crossed in that neighbourhood, and that ford was deep and narrow, so that two men could scarcely get through abreast; the ground on which they were to land on the side where the King was, was steep, and the path which led upwards from the water's edge to the top of the bank, extremely narrow and difficult.

Bruce caused his men to lie down to take some sleep, at a place about half a mile distant from the river, while he himself, with two attendants, went down to watch the ford, through which the enemy must needs pass before they could come to the place where King Robert's men were lying. He stood for

some time looking at the ford, and thinking how easily the enemy might be kept from passing there, provided it was bravely defended, when he heard at a distance the baying of a hound, which was always coming nearer and nearer. This was the bloodhound which was tracing the King's steps to the ford where he had crossed, and the two hundred Galloway men were along with the animal, and guided by it. Bruce at first thought of going back to awaken his men; but then he reflected that it might be only some shepherd's dog. "My men," he said, "are sorely tired; I will not disturb their sleep for the yelping of a cur, till I know something more of the matter." So he stood and listened; and by and by, as the cry of the hound came nearer, he began to hear a trampling of horses, and the voices of men, and the ringing and clattering of armour, and then he was sure the enemy were coming to the river side. Then the King thought, "If I go back to give my men the alarm, these Galloway men will get through the ford without opposition; and that would be a pity, since it is a place so advantageous to make defence against them." So he looked again at the steep path, and the deep river, and he thought that they gave him so much advantage, that he himself could defend the passage with his own hand, until his men came to assist him. His armour was so good and strong, that he had no fear of arrows, and therefore the combat was not so very unequal as it must have otherwise been. He therefore sent his followers to awaken his men, and remained alone by the bank of the river.

In the meanwhile, the noise and trampling of the horses increased; and the moon being bright, Bruce beheld the glancing arms of about two hundred men, who came down to the opposite bank of the river. The men of Galloway, on their part, saw but one solitary figure guarding the ford, and the foremost of them plunged into the river without minding him. But as they could only pass the ford one by one, the Bruce, who stood high above them on the bank where they were to land, killed the foremost man with a thrust of his long spear, and with a second thrust stabbed the horse, which fell down, kicking and plunging in his agonies, on the narrow path, and so prevented the others who were following from getting out of the river. Bruce had thus an opportunity of dealing his blows at pleasure among them, while they could not strike at him again. In the confusion, five or six of the enemy were slain, or, having been borne down the current, were drowned in the river. The rest were terrified, and drew back.

But when the Galloway men looked again, and saw they were opposed by only one man, they themselves being so many, they cried out that their honour would be lost for ever if they did not force their way; and encouraged each other, with loud cries, to plunge through and assault him. But by this time the King's soldiers came up to his assistance, and the Galloway men retreated, and gave up their enterprise.

I will tell you another story of this brave Robert Bruce during his wanderings. His adventures are

as curious and entertaining as those which men invent for story books, with this advantage, that they are all true.

About the time when the Bruce was yet at the head of but few men, Sir Aymer de Valence, who was Earl of Pembroke, together with John of Lorn, came into Galloway, each of them being at the head of a large body of men. John of Lorn had a bloodhound with him, which it was said had formerly belonged to Robert Bruce himself; and having been fed by the King with his own hands, it became attached to him, and would follow his footsteps anywhere, as dogs are well known to trace their master's steps, whether they be bloodhounds or not. By means of this hound, John of Lorn thought he should certainly find out Bruce, and take revenge on him for the death of his relation, Comyn.

When these two armies advanced upon King Robert, he at first thought of fighting with the English earl; but becoming aware that John of Lorn was moving round with another large body to attack him in the rear, he resolved to avoid fighting at that time, lest he should be oppressed by numbers. For this purpose, the King divided the men he had with him into three bodies, and commanded them to retreat by three different ways, thinking the enemy would not know which party to pursue. He also appointed a place at which they were to assemble again. But when John of Lorn came to the place where the army of Bruce had been thus divided, the bloodhound took his course after one of these divisions, neglecting the

other two, and then John of Lorn knew that the King must be in that party; so he also made no pursuit after the two other divisions of the Scots, but followed that which the dog pointed out, with all his men.

The King again saw that he was followed by a large body, and being determined to escape from them, if possible, he made all the people who were with him disperse themselves different ways, thinking thus that the enemy must needs lose trace of him. He kept only one man along with him, and that was his own foster-brother, or the son of his nurse. When John of Lorn came to the place where Bruce's companions had dispersed themselves, the bloodhound, after it had snuffed up and down for a little, quitted the footsteps of all the other fugitives, and ran barking upon the track of two men out of the whole number. Then John of Lorn knew that one of these two must needs be King Robert. Accordingly, he commanded five of his men that were speedy of foot to chase after him, and either make him prisoner, or slay him. The Highlanders started off accordingly, and ran so fast, that they gained sight of Robert and his foster-brother. The King asked his companion what help he could give him, and his foster-brother answered he was ready to do his best. So these two turned on the five men of John of Lorn, and killed them all. It is to be supposed they were better armed than the others were, as well as stronger and more desperate.

But by this time Bruce was very much fatigued, and yet they dared not sit down to take any rest; for

whenever they stopped for an instant, they heard the cry of the bloodhound behind them, and knew by that, that their enemies were coming up fast after them. At length they came to a wood, through which ran a small river. Then Bruce said to his foster-brother, "Let us wade down this stream for a great way, instead of going straight across, and so this unhappy hound will lose the scent; for if we were once clear of him, I should not be afraid of getting away from the pursuers." Accordingly the King and his attendant walked a great way down the stream, taking care to keep their feet in the water, which could not retain any scent where they had stepped. Then they came ashore on the further side from the enemy, and went deep into the wood before they stopped to rest themselves. In the meanwhile, the hound led John of Lorn straight to the place where the King went into the water, but there the dog began to be puzzled, not knowing where to go next; for you are well aware that the running water could not retain the scent of a man's foot, like that which remains on turf. So, John of Lorn seeing the dog was at fault, as it is called, that is, had lost the track of that which he pursued, he gave up the chase, and returned to join with Aymer de Valence.

But King Robert's adventures were not yet ended. His foster-brother and he had rested themselves in the wood, but they had got no food, and were become extremely hungry. They walked on, however, in hopes of coming to some habitation. At length, in the midst of the forest, they met with three men who looked like thieves or ruffians. They were

well armed, and one of them bore a sheep on his back, which it seemed as if they had just stolen. They saluted the King civilly; and he, replying to their salutation, asked them where they were going. The men answered, they were seeking for Robert Bruce, for that they intended to join with him. The King answered, that if they would go with him, he would conduct them where they would find the Scottish King. Then the man who had spoken, changed countenance, and Bruce, who looked sharply at him, began to suspect that the ruffian guessed who he was, and that he and his companions had some design against his person, in order to gain the reward which had been offered for his life.

So he said to them. "My good friends, as we are not well acquainted with each other, you must go before us, and we will follow near to you."

"You have no occasion to suspect any harm from us," answered the man.

"Neither do I suspect any," said Bruce; "but this is the way in which I choose to travel."

The men did as he commanded, and thus they travelled till they came together to a waste and ruinous cottage, where the men proposed to dress some part of the sheep, which their companion was carrying. The King was glad to hear of food; but he insisted that there should be two fires kindled, one for himself and his foster-brother at one end of the house, the other at the other end for their three companions. The men did as he desired. They broiled a quarter of mutton for themselves, and gave

another to the King and his attendant. They were obliged to eat it without bread or salt; but as they were very hungry, they were glad to get food in any shape, and partook of it very heartily.

Then so heavy a drowsiness fell on King Robert, that, for all the danger he was in, he could not resist an inclination to sleep. But first, he desired his foster-brother to watch while he slept, for he had great suspicion of their new acquaintances. His foster-brother promised to keep awake, and did his best to keep his word. But the King had not been long asleep ere his foster-brother fell into a deep slumber also, for he had undergone as much fatigue as the King. When the three villains saw the King and his attendant asleep, they made signs to each other, and, rising up at once, drew their swords with the purpose to kill them both. But the King slept but lightly, and for as little noise as the traitors made in rising, he was awakened by it, and, starting up, drew his sword, and went to meet them. At the same moment he pushed his foster-brother with his foot, to awaken him, and he got on his feet; but ere he got his eyes cleared to see what was about to happen, one of the ruffians that were advancing to slay the King, killed him with a stroke of his sword. The King was now alone, one man against three, and in the greatest danger of his life; but his amazing strength, and the good armour which he wore, freed him once more from this great peril, and he killed the three men, one after another. He then left the cottage, very sorrowful for the death of his faithful foster-brother, and took his direction towards the



place where he had appointed his men to assemble after their dispersion. It was now near night, and the place of meeting being a farm-house, he went boldly into it, where he found the mistress, an old true-hearted Scotswoman, sitting alone. Upon seeing a stranger enter, she asked him who and what he was. The King answered that he was a traveller, who was journeying through the country.

“ All travellers,” answered the good woman, “ are welcome here, for the sake of one.”

“ And who is that one,” said the King, “ for whose sake you make all travellers welcome?”

“ It is our rightful king, Robert the Bruce,” answered the mistress, “ who is the lawful lord of this country; and although he is now pursued and hunted after with hounds and horns, I hope to live to see him King over all Scotland.”

“ Since you love him so well, dame,” said the King, “ know that you see him before you. I am Robert the Bruce.”

“ You! ” said the good woman, in great surprise; “ and wherefore are you thus alone?—where are all your men? ”

“ I have none with me at this moment,” answered Bruce, “ and therefore I must travel alone.”

“ But that shall not be,” said the brave old dame, “ for I have two stout sons, gallant and trusty men, who shall be your servants for life and death.”

So she brought her two sons, and though she well knew the dangers to which she exposed them, she

made them swear fidelity to the King; and they afterwards became high officers in his service.

Now, the loyal old woman was getting everything ready for the King's supper, when suddenly there was a great trampling of horses heard round the house. They thought it must be some of the English, or John of Lorn's men, and the good wife called upon her sons to fight to the last for King Robert. But shortly after, they heard the voice of the Good Lord James of Douglas, and of Edward Bruce, the King's brother, who had come with a hundred and fifty horsemen to this farm-house, according to the instructions that the King had left with them at parting.

Robert the Bruce was right joyful to meet his brother, and his faithful friend Lord James; and had no sooner found himself once more at the head of such a considerable body of followers, than, forgetting hunger and weariness, he began to inquire where the enemy who had pursued them so long had taken up their abode for the night; "for," said he, "as they must suppose us totally scattered and fled, it is likely that they will think themselves quite secure, and disperse themselves into distant quarters, and keep careless watch."

"That is very true," answered James of Douglas, "for I passed a village where there are two hundred of them quartered, who had placed no sentinels; and if you have a mind to make haste, we may surprise them this very night, and do them more mischief than they have been able to do us during all this day's chase."

Then there was nothing but mount and ride; and as the Scots came by surprise on the body of English whom Douglas had mentioned, and rushed suddenly into the village where they were quartered, they easily dispersed and cut them to pieces; thus, as Douglas had said, doing their pursuers more injury than they themselves had received during the long and severe pursuit of the preceding day.

*Sir Walter Scott*

## THE WHITE KNIGHT

FROM "ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS"

She thought she had never seen such a strange-looking soldier in all her life.

He was dressed in tin armour, which seemed to fit him very badly, and he had a queer little deal box fastened across his shoulders upside-down, and with the lid hanging open. Alice looked at it with great curiosity.

"I see you're admiring my little box," the Knight said in a friendly tone. "It's my own invention—to keep clothes and sandwiches in. You see I carry it upside-down, so that the rain can't get in."

"But the things can get *out*," Alice gently remarked. "Do you know the lid's open?"

"I didn't know it," the Knight said, a shade of vexation passing over his face. "Then all the things must have fallen out! And the box is no use without them." He unfastened it as he spoke, and was just going to throw it into the bushes, when a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he hung it carefully on a tree. "Can you guess why I did that?" he said to Alice.

Alice shook her head.

"In hopes some bees may make a nest in it—then I should get the honey."

"But you've got a bee-hive—or something like one—fastened to the saddle," said Alice.

"Yes, it's a very good bee-hive," the Knight said in a discontented tone, "one of the best kind. But not a single bee has come near it yet. And the other thing is a mouse-trap. I suppose the mice keep the bees out—or the bees keep the mice out, I don't know which."

"I was wondering what the mouse-trap was for," said Alice. "It isn't very likely there would be any mice on the horse's back."

"Not very likely, perhaps," said the Knight; "but, if they *do* come, I don't choose to have them running all about."

"You see," he went on after a pause, "it's as well to be provided for *everything*. That's the reason the horse has anklets round his feet."

"But what are they for?" Alice asked in a tone of great curiosity.

"To guard against the bites of sharks," the Knight replied. "It's an invention of my own. And now help me on. I'll go with you to the end of the wood—What's that dish for?"

"It's meant for plum-cake," said Alice.

"We'd better take it with us," the Knight said. "It'll come in handy if we find any plum-cake. Help me to get it into this bag."

This took a long time to manage, though Alice held the bag open very carefully, because the Knight was so *very* awkward in putting in the dish: the first

two or three times that he tried he fell in himself instead. "It's rather a tight fit, you see," he said, as they got it in at last; "there are so many candlesticks in the bag." And he hung it to the saddle, which was already loaded with bunches of carrots, and fire-irons, and many other things.

"I hope you've got your hair well fastened on?" he continued, as they set off.

"Only in the usual way," Alice said, smiling.

"That's hardly enough," he said anxiously.

"You see the wind is so *very* strong here. It's as strong as soup."

"Have you invented a plan for keeping one's hair from being blown off?" Alice inquired.

"Not yet," said the Knight. "But I've got a plan for keeping it from *falling* off."

"I should like to hear it very much."

"First you take an upright stick," said the Knight. "Then you make your hair creep up it, like a fruit-tree. Now the reason hair falls off is because it hangs *down*—things never fall *upwards*, you know. It's my own invention. You may try it if you like."

It didn't sound a comfortable plan, Alice thought, and for a few minutes she walked on in silence, puzzling over the idea, and every now and then stopping to help the poor Knight, who certainly was *not* a good rider.

Whenever the horse stopped (which it did very often), he fell off in front; and whenever it went on again (which it generally did rather suddenly), he fell off behind. Otherwise he kept on pretty well, except that he had a habit of now and then falling

off sideways; and as he generally did this on the side on which Alice was walking, she soon found that it was the best plan not to walk *quite* close to the horse.

"I'm afraid you've not had much practice in riding," she ventured to say, as she was helping him up from his fifth tumble.

The Knight looked very much surprised, and a little offended at the remark. "What makes you say that?" he asked, as he scrambled back into the saddle, keeping hold of Alice's hair with one hand, to save himself from falling over on the other side.

"Because people don't fall off quite so often, when they've had much practice."

"I've had plenty of practice," the Knight said very gravely: "plenty of practice!"

Alice could think of nothing better to say than, "Indeed?" but she said it as heartily as she could. They went on a little way in silence after this, the Knight with his eyes shut, muttering to himself, and Alice watching anxiously for the next tumble.

"The great art of riding," the Knight suddenly began in a loud voice, waving his right arm as he spoke, "is to keep—" Here the sentence ended as suddenly as it had begun, as the Knight fell heavily on the top of his head exactly in the path where Alice was walking. She was quite frightened this time, and said in an anxious tone, as she picked him up, "I hope no bones are broken."

"None to speak of," the Knight said, as if he didn't mind breaking two or three of them. "The great art of riding, as I was saying, is—to keep your balance. Like this you know—"

He let go the bridle, and stretched out both his arms to show Alice what he meant, and this time he fell flat on his back, right under the horse's feet.

"Plenty of practice!" he went on repeating all the time that Alice was getting him on his feet again. "Plenty of practice!"

"It's too ridiculous!" cried Alice, getting quite out of patience. "You ought to have a wooden horse on wheels, that you ought!"

"Does that kind go smoothly?" the Knight asked in a tone of great interest, clasping his arms round the horse's neck as he spoke, just in time to save himself from tumbling off again.

"Much more smoothly than a live horse," Alice said, with a little scream of laughter, in spite of all she could do to prevent it.

"I'll get one," the Knight said thoughtfully to himself. "One or two—several."

There was a short silence after this; then the Knight went on again. "I'm a great hand at inventing things. Now, I dare say you noticed, the last time you picked me up, that I was looking thoughtful?"

"You *were* a little grave," said Alice.

"Well, just then I was inventing a new way of getting over a gate—would you like to hear it?"

"Very much indeed," Alice said politely.

"I'll tell you how I came to think of it," said the Knight. "You see, I said to myself, 'The only difficulty is with the feet: the *head* is high enough already.' Now first I put my head on the top of the gate—then the head's high enough—then I stand on



my head—then the feet are high enough, you see—then I'm over, you see."

"Yes, I suppose you'd be over when that was done," Alice said thoughtfully: "but don't you think it would be rather hard?"

"I haven't tried it yet," the Knight said, gravely: "so I can't tell for certain—but I'm afraid it *would* be a little hard."

He looked so vexed at the idea, that Alice changed the subject hastily. "What a curious helmet you've got!" she said cheerfully. "Is that your invention too?"

The Knight looked down proudly at his helmet, which hung from the saddle, "Yes," he said, "but I've invented a better one than that—like a sugar-loaf. When I used to wear it, if I fell off the horse, it always touched the ground directly. So I had a *very* little way to fall, you see—But there *was* the danger of falling *into* it, to be sure. That happened to me once—and the worst of it was, before I could get out again, the other White Knight came and put it on. He thought it was his own helmet."

The Knight looked so solemn about it that Alice did not dare to laugh. "I'm afraid you must have hurt him," she said in a trembling voice, "being on the top of his head."

"I had to kick him, of course," the Knight said, very seriously. "And then he took the helmet off again—but it took hours and hours to get me out. I was as fast as—as lightning, you know."

"But that's a different kind of fastness," Alice objected.

The Knight shook his head. “(It was all kinds of fastness with me, I can assure you!)” he said.) He raised his hands in some excitement as he said this, and instantly rolled out of the saddle, and fell headlong into a deep ditch.

Alice ran to the side of the ditch to look for him. She was rather startled by the fall, as for some time he had kept on very well, and she was afraid that he really *was* hurt this time. However, though she could see nothing but the soles of his feet, she was much relieved to hear that he was talking on in his usual tone. “All kinds of fastness,” he repeated: “but it was careless of him to put another man’s helmet on—with the man in it, too.”

“How *can* you go on talking so quietly, head downwards?” Alice asked, as she dragged him out by the feet, and laid him in a heap on the bank.

The Knight looked surprised at the question. “What does it matter where my body happens to be?” he said. (“My mind goes on working all the same. In fact, the more head downwards I am, the more I keep inventing new things.”)

*Lewis Carroll*

## A WHITE MAN'S ADVENTURES AMONG THE AUSTRALIAN BLACKS

Night and day we sailed steadily on, occasionally sighting sharks and even whales, and you may imagine my feelings when, early in the morning of the tenth day, Yamba suddenly gripped my arm and murmured, "We are nearing my home at last." I leapt to my feet, and a few minutes afterwards the mainland came hazily into view. Instead of heading straight for it, however, we made for a beautiful island that stood in the mouth of a large bay, and here we landed to recuperate for a day or so. Immediately on our arrival, Yamba and her husband lit some fires, and made what were apparently smoke signals to their friends on the main. They first cut down a quantity of green wood with my tomahawk, and arranged it in the form of a pyramid. Next they obtained fire by rubbing together two pieces of a certain kind of wood, and as the smoke ascended we saw answering smoke-signals from the opposite shore. Not long after this curious exchange of signals (and the practice is virtually universal throughout the whole of aboriginal Australia) we saw three catamarans, each carrying a man, shooting across towards our island,

I viewed their approach with mixed sensations of alarm and hope. I was in the power of these people, I thought. They could tear me limb from limb, torture me, kill and eat me, if they so pleased; I was absolutely helpless...

Nevertheless, I awaited the arrival of the little flotilla with all the complacency I could muster, but at the same time I was careful to let Yamba's husband be the first to receive them.

And he advanced to meet them. The new-comers, having landed, squatted down some little distance away from the man they had come to meet, and then Mr. Yamba and they gradually edged forwards towards one another, until at length each placed his nose upon the other's shoulder. This was apparently the native method of embracing. Later Mr. Yamba brought his friends to be introduced to me, and to the best of my ability I went through the same ridiculous ceremony. I must say my new friends evinced an almost uncontrollable terror at the sight of me. Mr. Yamba, however, made it clear that I was not a returned spirit, but a man like themselves—a great man, certainly, and a mysterious man, but a man all the same. Although by this time my skin had become tanned and dark, there was seemingly no end to the amazement it caused the blacks. They timidly touched and felt my body, legs, and arms, and were vastly anxious to know what the covering was I had round my body. In due time, however, the excitement subsided somewhat, and then the new-comers prepared more

smoke-signals to their friends on the mainland, this time building five separate fires in the form of a circle.

It was interesting to watch this remarkable method of communication. Each fire was set smoking fiercely a few seconds after its neighbour had started. Finally, the columns of smoke united, and ascended together in the form of a pyramid, going up a tremendous height into the still, hot air. The meaning of these signals was explained to me. They indicated to the people on the mainland that the advanced guard had found me and my companions, and that, furthermore, they might expect us to return all together almost immediately. By this time, thanks to Yamba's able and intelligent lessons, I was able to speak the queer language of the blacks with some show of fluency, and I could understand them well enough when they did not jabber too quickly.

The next phase of our arrival was that 'smokes' were ascending in all directions on the mainland, evidently calling the tribes from far and near. How these smoke-signals gave an idea of the white man and his wonders I am utterly at a loss to imagine. In the meantime Yamba had prepared a great feast for the visitors, the principal dish being our remaining big turtle, of which the blacks ate a prodigious quantity. I afterwards told them that I was in need of a prolonged rest, my long journey having wearied me, and after this explanation I retired, and slung my hammock in a shady nook, where I slept undisturbed from shortly before noon until late in the day, when my ever-faithful Yamba, who had been keeping

a careful watch, woke me and said that the festivities prior to our departure were about to take place.

Much refreshed, I rejoined the blacks, and, to their unbounded delight and amazement, entertained them for a few minutes with some of my acrobatic tricks and contortions. Some of the more emulous among them tried to imitate my feats of agility, but always came dismally to grief—a performance that created even more frantic merriment than my own. After a little while the blacks disappeared, only to come forth a few minutes later with their bodies gorgeously decorated with stripes of yellow ochre and red and white pigments. These starting preparations preceded a great *corroboree* in honour of my arrival, and in this embarrassing function I was, of course, expected to join. The ceremony was kept up with extraordinary vigour the whole night long, but all I was required to do was to sit beating sticks together, and join in the general uproar. This was all very well for a little while, but the monotony of the affair was terrible, and I withdrew to my hammock before midnight.

In the morning I saw a great fleet of catamarans putting off from the mainland, and in a very short time between fifty and sixty natives joined our party on the island. Then followed the usual greetings and comical expressions of amazement—of course, at the sight of me, my boat, and everything in it. A few hours later the whole crowd left the island, led by me in the big boat—which, by the way, attracted almost as much interest as I did myself. The natives forced their catamarans through the water at great speed,

using only one paddle, which was dipped first on one side and then on the other in rapid succession, without, however, causing the apparently frail craft to swerve in the slightest degree.

As we approached the new country, I beheld a vast surging crowd of excited blacks—men, women, and children, all perfectly naked—standing on the beach. The moment we landed there was a most extraordinary rush for my boat, and everything on board her was there and then subjected to the closest scrutiny.

The people seemed to be divided into clans, and when one clan was busy inspecting my implements and utensils, another was patiently waiting its turn to examine the white man's wonders. I sat in the boat for some time, fairly bewildered and deafened by the uproarious jabberings and excited cries of amazement and wonder that filled the air all round me. At last, however, the blacks who had come out to meet us on the island came to my rescue, and escorted me through the crowd, with visible pride, to an eminence overlooking the native camping-ground. I then learnt that the news of my coming had been spread in every direction for hundreds of miles; hence the enormous gathering of clans on the beach.

The camping-ground I now found myself upon consisted solely of about thirty primitive shelters, built of boughs in the most flimsy manner, and only intended to break the force of the wind. These shelters, or "break-winds," were crescent-shaped, had no roof, and were not in any way closed in the front. There were, however, two or three grass huts

of beehive shape, about seven feet high and ten feet in diameter, with a queer little hole at the base through which the occupier had to crawl. The inside was perfectly dark. . .

Everywhere I went the natives were absolutely overwhelming in their hospitality, and presents of food of all kinds were fairly showered into my hut, including such delicacies as kangaroo and opossum meat, rats, snakes, tree-worms, fish, etc. Baked snake, I ought to mention, was a very pleasant dish indeed, but as there was no salt forthcoming, and the flesh was very tasteless, I cannot say I enjoyed this particular native dainty. The snakes were invariably baked whole in their skins, and the meat was very tender and juicy, though a little insipid as to flavour. The native method of cooking is to scoop out a hole in the sand with the hands, and then place the article to be cooked at the bottom. A layer of sand was then thrown over the 'joint.' Next come loose stones, and the fire is built on the top of all. Rats were always plentiful, often so much so as to become a serious nuisance. These were of the large brown variety, and were not at all bad eating. I may say here that the women-folk were responsible for the catching of the rats, the method adopted being to poke in their holes with sticks, and then kill them as they rush out. The women, by the way, were responsible for a good many things. They were their masters' dressers, so to speak, in that they were required to carry supplies of the greasy clay or earth with which the blacks anoint their bodies to ward off the sun's rays and insect bites; and beside this, woe



betide the wives if *corroboree* time found them without an ample supply of coloured pigments for the decoration of their masters' bodies. One of the principal duties of the women-folk, however, was the provision of roots for the family's dinner. The most important among these necessities—besides fine yams—was the root of a kind of water-lily, which was not unlike a sweet potato.

There was usually a good water-supply in the neighbourhood of these camps, and if that water-supply failed, as it very frequently did, the whole tribe simply moved its quarters elsewhere—perhaps a hundred miles off. The instinct of these people for finding water, however, was nothing short of miraculous. No one would think of going down to the seashore to look for fresh water, yet they often showed me the purest and most refreshing of liquids oozing up out of the sand on the beach after the tide had receded.

All this time, and for many months afterwards, my boat and everything it contained were saved from molestation and theft by a curious device on the part of Yamba. She simply placed a couple of crossed sticks on the sand near the bows, this being evidently a sign to all beholders that they were to respect the property of the stranger among them; and I verily believe that the boat and its contents might have remained there until they fell to pieces before any one of those cannibal blacks would have dreamed of touching anything that belonged to me.....

I settled down to my new life in the course of a few days, but I need hardly remark I did not

propose staying in that forlorn spot longer than I could help. This was my plan. I would first of all, I thought, make myself acquainted with the habits and customs of the blacks, and pick up as much bushmanship and knowledge of the country as it was possible to acquire, in case I should have to travel inland in search of civilization instead of over-sea. There was always, however, the hope that some day I might either be able to get away by sea in my boat or else hail some passing vessel—many of which, the blacks told me, they had seen pass at a distance.

Every morning I was astir by sunrise, and—hope springing eternal—I at once searched for the faintest indication of a passing sail. Next I would bathe in a lagoon protected from sharks, drying myself by a run on the beach. Meanwhile, Yamba would have gone out searching for roots for breakfast, and she seldom returned without a supply of my favourite water-lily roots already mentioned. Often, in the years that followed, has that heroic creature *tramped on foot a hundred miles* to get me a few sprigs of saline herbs; she had heard me say I wanted salt. She would also bring in, by way of seasoning, a kind of small onion, known as the *nelga*, which, when roasted, made a very acceptable addition to our limited fare. The natives themselves had but two meals a day—breakfast, between eight and nine o'clock, and then an enormous feast in the late afternoon. Their ordinary food consisted of kangaroo, emu, snakes, rats, and fish; an especial dainty being a worm found in the black ava tree, or in any decaying trunk.

These worms were generally grilled on hot stones and eaten several at a time, like small whitebait. I often ate them myself, and found them most palatable. After breakfast the women of the tribe would go out hunting roots and snaring small game for the afternoon meal, while the men went off on their war and hunting expeditions, or amused themselves with feats of arms. The children were generally left to their own devices in the camp, and the principal amusement of the boys appeared to be the hurling of reed spears at one another. The women brought home the roots (which they dug up with sticks) in nets made of opossum hair, slung on their all-enduring backs. They generally returned heavily laden between two and three in the afternoon. I always knew the time pretty accurately by the sun, but I lost count of the days. The months, however, I always reckoned by the moon, and for each year I made a notch in the inside of my bow.

My own food, by the way, was usually wrapped in leaves before being placed in the sand oven, and my indefatigable wife was always exercising her ingenuity to provide me with fresh dainties. In addition to the ordinary fare of the natives, I frequently had wild ducks and turkeys, and—what was perhaps the greatest luxury of all—eggs, which the natives sent for specially on my account to distant parts of the surrounding country.

At the time of my shipwreck I had little or no knowledge of Australian geography, so that I was utterly at a loss to know my position. I afterwards learnt, however, that Yamba's home was on Cam-

bridge Gulf, on the N.N.W. coast of the Australian continent.

Almost every evening the blacks would hold a stately *corroboree*, singing and chanting, the burden of their song being almost invariably myself, my belongings, and my prowess, which latter, I fear, was magnified in the most extravagant manner...

The *corroboree* was, perhaps, the greatest institution known to the blacks, who, obliged to do no real work, as we understand it, simply had to pass the time somehow; and there can be no doubt that, were it not for the constant feuds and consequent incessant wars, the race would have greatly deteriorated. The *corroboree* after a successful battle commenced with a cannibal feast off the bodies of fallen foes, and would be kept up for several days on end, the braves lying down to sleep near the fire towards morning, and renewing the festivities about noon next day. The chiefs on these occasions decked themselves with gorgeous cockatoo feathers, and painted their bodies with red and yellow ochre and other glaring pigments. A couple of hours were generally spent in dressing and preparing for the ceremony, and then the gaily-decorated fighting-men would dance or squat round the fires and chant monotonous songs, telling of all their own achievements and valour and the extraordinary sights they had seen in their travels.

The words of the songs were usually composed by the clan's own poet, who made a living solely by his profession, and even sold his effusions to other tribes. As there was no written language the purchaser would simply be coached orally by the vendor

poet, and as the blacks were gifted with most marvellous memories, they would transmit and resell the songs throughout vast stretches of country. These men of the north were of magnificent stature, and possessed great personal strength. They were able to walk extraordinary distances, and their carriage was the most graceful I have ever seen. The women are not very prepossessing, and not nearly so graceful in their bearing and gait as the men. Poor creatures, they did all the hard work of the camp—building, food-hunting, waiting, and serving. Occasionally, however, the men did condescend to go out fishing, and they would also organize *battues* when a big supply of food was wanted. These great hunting-parties were arranged on an immense scale, and fire figured largely in them. The usual routine was to set fire to the bush; and then as the terrified animals and reptiles rushed out in thousands into the open, each party of blacks speared every living thing that came its way within a certain sphere. The roar of the fast-spreading fire, the thousands of kangaroos, opossums, rats, snakes, iguanas, and birds that dashed hither and thither, to the accompaniment of bewildering shouts from the men and shrill screeches from the women, who occasionally assisted, flitting hither and thither like eerie witches amidst the dense pall of black smoke—all these made up a picture which is indelibly printed on my mind. As to the fishing parties, these went out either early in the morning, soon after sunrise, or in the evening, when it was quite dark. On the latter occasions, the men carried big torches, which they held high in the

air with one hand as they waded out into the water with their spears poised, in readiness to impale the first big fish they came across.

When the spearmen *did* strike, their aim was unerring, and the struggling fish would be hurled on to the beach to the patient women-folk, who were there waiting for them, with their big nets of opossum hair slung over their backs. Sometimes a hundred men would be in the shallow water at once, all carrying blazing torches, and the effect as the fishermen plunged and splashed this way and that, with shouts of triumph or disappointment, may be better imagined than described. In the daytime a rather different method was adopted. A large area of the shallow lagoon would be staked out at low water in the shape of an inverted V, an opening being left for the fish to pass through. The high tide brought the fish in vast shoals, and then the opening would be closed. When the tide receded, the staked enclosure became, in effect, one gigantic net, filled with floundering fish, big and little. The natives then waded into the enclosure, and dispatched the fish with their spears.

Nothing was more interesting than to watch one of these children of the bush stalking a kangaroo. The man made not the slightest noise in walking, and he would stealthily follow the kangaroo's track for miles (the tracks were absolutely invisible to the uninitiated). Should at length the kangaroo sniff a tainted wind, or be startled by an incautious movement, his pursuer would suddenly become as rigid as a bronze figure, and he could remain in this position

for hours. Finally, when within thirty or forty yards of the animal, the huntsman launched his spear at the creature, and in all the years I was amongst these people I never knew one to miss his aim. The spears used were about five feet long, with a blade made either of bone or stone, and a shaft of some light, hard wood. Metals were, of course, practically unknown as workable materials.

In order to catch emus the hunters would construct little shelters of grass at a spot overlooking the water-hole frequented by these birds, and they were then speared as they came down for water. The largest emu I ever saw, by the way, was more than six feet high, whilst the biggest kangaroo I came across was even taller than this. Snakes were always killed with sticks, whilst birds were brought down with the wonderful boomerang....

The blacks never allowed their fires to go out, and whenever they moved their camping-ground, the women-folk always took with them their smouldering fire-sticks, with which they can kindle a blaze in a few minutes. Very rarely indeed did the women allow their fire-sticks to go out altogether, for this would mean a cruel and severe punishment. The wives bore ill-usage with the most extraordinary equanimity, and never attempted to parry the most savage blow. They would remain meek and motionless under a shower of brutal blows from a thick stick, and would then walk quietly away and treat their bleeding wounds with a kind of earth. It often surprised me how quickly the blacks' most terrible

wounds healed, and yet they were only treated with a kind of clay and leaves.

I am here reminded of the native doctor. This functionary was called a *rui*, and he effected most of his cures with a little shell, with which he rubbed assiduously upon the affected part. Thus it will be seen that the medical treatment was a form of massage, the rubbing being done first in a downward direction and then cross-wise. I must say, however, that the blacks were very rarely troubled with illness, their most frequent disorder being usually the result of excessive gorging when a particularly ample supply of food was forthcoming, say, after a big *battue* over a tribal preserve.

In an ordinary case of overfeeding, the medicine man would rub his patient's stomach with such vigour as often to draw blood. He would also give the sufferer a kind of grass to eat, and this herb, besides clearing the system, also acted as a most marvellous appetizer. The capacity of some of my blacks, by the way, was almost beyond belief.

One giant I have in my mind ate a whole kangaroo by himself. I saw him do it. Certainly it was not an excessively big animal, but, still, it was a meal large enough for three or four stalwart men.....

I now come to an event of very great importance in my life. I went forth one morning, accompanied by my ever-faithful Yamba and the usual admiring crowd of blacks. In a few minutes we two were speeding over the sunlit waters, my only weapon being the steel harpoon I had brought with me from the island, and about forty or fifty feet of manila rope.



When we were some miles from land I noticed a dark-looking object on the surface of the water a little way ahead. Feeling certain it was a dugong feeding on the well-known grass, I rose and hurled my harpoon at it with all the force I could muster. Next moment, to my amazement, the head of a calf whale was thrust agonizingly into the air, and not until then did I realize what manner of creature it was I had struck. This baby whale was about fifteen feet long and it 'sounded' immediately on receiving my harpoon. As I had enough rope, or what I considered enough, I did not cut him adrift. He came up again presently, lashing the water with his tail, and creating a tremendous uproar, considering his size. He then darted off madly, dashing through the water like an arrow, and dragging our boat at such a tremendous pace as almost to swamp us in the foaming wash.

Up to this time I had no thought of danger, but just as the baby whale haulted I looked round, and saw to my horror that its colossal mother had joined her offspring, and was swimming round and round it like lightning, apparently greatly disturbed by its sufferings. Before I could even cut the line or attempt to get out of the way, the enormous creature caught sight of our little craft, and bore down upon it like a fair-sized island rushing through the sea. I shouted to Yamba, and we both threw ourselves over the side into the now raging waters, and commenced to swim away with long strokes, in order to get as far as possible from the boat before the catastrophe came which we knew was at hand. We had not got many yards before I heard the terrific crash, and

looking back, I saw the enormous tail of the great whale towering high out of the water, and my precious boat descending in fragments upon it, from a height of from fifteen to twenty feet above the agitated waters. Oddly enough, the forepart of the boat remained fixed to the rope of the harpoon in the calf. My first thought, even at so terrible a moment, and in so serious a situation, was one of bitter regret for the loss of what I considered the only means of reaching civilization. Like a flash it came back to me how many weary months of toil and hope and expectancy I had spent over that darling craft; and I remembered, too, the delirious joy of launching it, and the appalling dismay that struck me when I realized that it was worse than useless to me in the enclosed lagoon. These thoughts passed through my mind in a few seconds.

At this time we had a swim of ten miles before us, and yet in the far distance I could not only see land distinctly, but also the crowd of blacks, who were now putting out in their catamarans to help us. Some of the blacks, as I hinted before, always accompanied me down to the shore on these trips. They never tired, I think, of seeing me handle my giant "catamaran" and the (to them) mysterious harpoon. After the mother whale had wreaked its vengeance upon my unfortunate boat it rejoined its little one, and still continued to swim round and round it at prodigious speed, evidently in a perfect agony of concern. Fortunately the tide was in our favour, and we were rapidly swept inshore, even as we floated listlessly on the surface of the water. The sea was

quite calm, and we had no fear of sharks, being well aware that we could keep them away by splashing in the water.

Before long, a large catamaran with one of the chiefs on board came up with us, but although deeply grateful for Yamba's and my own safety, I was still greatly distressed at the loss of my boat. Never once did this thought leave my mind. I remembered too, with a pang, that I had now no tools with which to build another boat, and to venture out into the open sea on a catamaran, probably for weeks, simply meant courting certain destruction.

My harpoon had evidently inflicted a mortal wound on the whale baby, because as we looked we saw it lying exhausted on the surface of the water, and being gradually swept nearer and nearer the shore by the swift flowing tide. The mother refused to leave the little calf, however, and still continued to wheel round it, even when her offspring had reached dangerously shallow water.

The result was that when the tide turned, both the mother and her calf were left stranded high and dry on the beach, to the unbounded delight and amazement of the natives, who swarmed round the leviathans, and set up such a terrific uproar, that I verily believe they frightened the mother to death. Furious smoke-signals were at once sent up to summon all the tribes in the surrounding country—enemies as well as friends. Next day the carcasses were washed still further inshore—a thing for which the blacks gave me additional credit.

I ought to mention here that the loss of my boat was in some measure compensated for by the enormous amount of prestige which accrued to me from this whale episode. To cut a long story short, the natives fully believed that *I had killed single-handed and brought ashore both whales!* And in the *corroborees* that ensued, the poets almost went delirious in trying to find suitable eulogiums to bestow upon the mighty white hunter.

*Louis de Rougemont*

## THE INSIDE OF THE EARTH

1. It may seem, at first, hardly possible that man should ever know anything about the earth's interior. Think what a huge ball this globe of ours is, and how, in living and moving over its surface, we are merely like flies walking over a great hill. All that can be seen from the top of the highest mountain to the bottom of the deepest mine is not more, in comparison with the size of the whole earth, than the thickness of the mere varnish on the outside of a school-globe.

2. And yet a good deal may be learnt as to what takes place within the earth. Here and there, in different countries, there are places where communication exists between the interior and the surface; and it is from such places that much of our information on this subject is derived. Volcanoes or *Burning-mountains* are among the most important of these channels of communication.

3. Suppose you were to visit one of these volcanoes just before what is called an "eruption." From the distance it appears as a conical mountain with its top cut off. From this truncated summit white cloud rises, but not quite such a cloud as may be seen on an ordinary hill-top. For after watching it a little

time, you would notice that it rises out of the top of the mountain, even when the sky is cloudless. Ascending from the vegetation of the lower grounds, you would find that the slopes consist partly of loose stones and ashes, partly of rough black sheets of rock, like the slags of an iron furnace. Nearer the top the ground feels hot, and puffs of steam, together with stifling vapours, come out of it here and there. At last when the summit is reached, what seemed from below to be a level top is seen to be in reality a great basin, with steep walls descending into the depths of the mountain. Screening your face as well as possible from the hot gases which would almost choke you, you might creep to the edge of this basin and look down into it. Far below, at the base of the rough red and yellow cliffs which form its sides, lies a pool of some liquid glowing with a white heat, though covered for the most part with a black crust like that seen on the outside of the mountain during the ascent. From this fiery pool jets of the red-hot liquid are jerked out every now and then, and harden into stone as they are cooled in the air. Showers of stones and dust are shot forth and fall back again into the caldron or down the outside of the mountain. Clouds of steam ascend from the same source to form the uprising cloud which is seen from a great distance, hanging over the mountain-top.

↳ The caldron-shaped hollow on the summit of the mountain is called the *Crater*. The intensely heated liquid in the sputtering boiling pool at its bottom is melted rock or *Lava*. The fragmentary materials—

ashes, dust, cinders, and stones—are torn from liquid lava or from the hardened sides and bottom of the crater by the violence of the explosions with which the gases and steam escape.

5 The hot air and steam, and the melted mass at the bottom of the crater, show that there must be some source of intense heat underneath. And, as in the case of the well-known volcanoes, Etna and Vesuvius, this heat has been coming out for hundreds or even thousands of years without sensible diminution.

6. But it is when the volcano appears in active eruption that the power of this underground heat shows itself most markedly. For a day or two beforehand the ground around the mountain trembles. At length, in a series of violent explosions, the heart of the volcano is torn open, and perhaps its upper part is blown into the air. Huge clouds of steam roll away up for thousands of feet into the air, mingled with fine dust and red-hot stones. The heavier stones fall back again into the crater, or on the outer slopes of the mountain, but the finer ashes come out in such quantity as sometimes to spread over the sky and make noonday as dark as midnight for many miles round. These ashes or dust partly settle down over the surrounding country as a thick covering and partly are carried away into other regions by upper currents of the atmosphere. Streams of molten lava run down the outside of the mountain, and descend even to the gardens and houses at the base, burning up or overflowing whatever lies in their path. This state of matters continues for days or weeks, until

the volcano exhausts itself, and then a time of comparative quiet comes when only steam, hot vapours, and gases are given off.

7 About 1,800 years ago there was a mountain near Naples shaped like a volcano, and with a large crater covered with brushwood. No one had ever seen any steam, or ashes, or lava come from it, and the people did not imagine it to be a volcano, like some other mountains in that part of Europe. They had built villages and towns around its base, and their district, from its beauty and soft climate, used to attract wealthy Romans to build villas there. But at last, after hardly any warning, the whole of the higher part of the mountain was blown into the air with terrific explosions. Such showers of fine ashes fell for miles around that the day was as dark as midnight. Day and night, the ashes and stones descended on the surrounding country; many of the inhabitants were killed, either by stones falling on them, or from suffocation by the dust. When at last the eruption ceased, the district, which had before drawn visitors from all parts of the Old World, was found to be a mere desert of gray dust and stones. Towns and villages, vineyards and gardens, were all buried. Of the towns, the two most noted, called Herculaneum and Pompeii, so completely disappeared that, although important places at the time, their very sites were forgotten, and only by accident, after the lapse of some fifteen hundred years, were they discovered. Excavations have since that time been carried on, the hardened volcanic accumulations have been partially removed from the two old towns, and



one can now walk through the streets of Pompeii again, with their roofless dwelling-houses and shops, theatres and temples, and mark on the causeway the deep ruts worn by the carriage wheels of the Pompeians eighteen centuries ago. Beyond the walls of the now silent city rises Mount Vesuvius, with its smoking crater, covering one-half of the old mountain which was blown up when Pompeii disappeared.

8. Volcanoes, then, mark the position of some of the holes or orifices, whereby heated materials from the inside of the earth are thrown up to the surface. They occur in all quarters of the globe. In Europe, besides Mount Vesuvius, which has been more or less active since its great eruption in the first century, Etna, Stromboli, Santorin, and other smaller volcanoes, occur in the basin of the Mediterranean; while far to the north-west, active volcanoes rise amid the snows and glaciers of Iceland. In South America a chain of huge volcanoes stretches down the range of the Andes, that rise near the western margin of the continent. In Asia, volcanoes are thickly grouped together in Java and surrounding islands, where in August, 1883 there occurred at the island of Krakatoa the most stupendous volcanic eruption of recent times. From that district a line of active volcanoes stretches through Japan and the Aleutian Isles to the extremity of North America. Tracing this distribution upon the map, we observe that the Pacific Ocean is girdled round with volcanoes.

9. Since these openings into the interior of the earth are so numerous over the surface, it has been inferred that the interior is intensely hot. But other

proofs of this internal heat may be gathered. In many countries *hot springs* rise to the surface. In some volcanic districts hot water and steam gush out at intervals with great force into the air for a height of a hundred feet or more. Even in England, which is a long way from any active volcano, the water of the wells of Bath is quite warm (120° Fahr.). It is known, too, that in all countries the heat increases as we descend into the earth. The deeper a mine the warmer are the rocks and air at its bottom. If the heat continues to increase in the same proportion, the rocks must be red-hot at no great distance beneath us. The conclusion has, therefore, been drawn that this globe on which we live has a comparatively thin, cool outer shell or crust, within which the interior is intensely hot.

¶ The explosions of a volcano shake the ground, sometimes with great violence. But the solid earth is affected by movements even remote from any volcano. Very delicate instruments have revealed that though the ground beneath us seems to be perfectly steady, it is continually affected by slight tremors. When the movement becomes strong enough to be quite perceptible it is called an *Earthquake*, which may vary from a feeble, hardly sensible trembling of the ground up to a violent concussion, whereby the ground is convulsed and even rent open, trees, rocks, and buildings are thrown down, and sometimes thousands of people are killed. Earthquakes are more particularly frequent and destructive in mountainous regions, along ocean borders, and around active volcanoes.

11. Though earthquakes may destroy much life and property, they do not permanently alter the face of the globe so much as another kind of earth-movement of a much slower and less startling nature. Some parts of the land are slowly rising. When this upheaval takes place in maritime tracts, rocks that used always to be covered by the tides come to lie wholly beyond their limits; while others, once never to be seen at all, begin one by one to show their heads above water. On the other hand, some regions are slowly sinking; piers, sea-walls, and other old landmarks on the beach, are one after another enveloped by the sea as it encroaches farther and higher on the land.

12 Even at the present day, therefore, we know that one result of the movement of the outer part or crust of the earth is to raise some regions above the level of the sea, and to increase the height of others that are already dry land. Reflecting on this process, we soon perceive that it must be by such elevations that dry land continues upon the face of the earth. If rain and frost, rivers, glaciers, and the sea, were continually and without check to wear down the surface of the land, that surface would necessarily in the end disappear, and indeed must have disappeared long ago. But, on the one hand, owing to the pushing out of some parts of the earth's surface from within, portions of the land are raised to a higher level, while parts of the bed of the sea are actually upheaved so as to form land. On the other hand, certain larger tracts, more particularly of the ocean-floor sink inward; the ocean-basins are thus

deepened, and in some measure the level of the sea is thereby lowered.

13 This kind of oscillation has happened many times in all quarters of the globe. Most of our hills and valleys are formed of rocks which were originally laid down on the bottom of the sea, and have been subsequently raised into land. In almost every country proofs may be found that the land has repeatedly been submerged and re-elevated.

*Sir Archibald Geikie*

## OUR LADY'S JUGGLER

(FROM "MOTHER OF PEARL," TRANSLATED BY FREDERIC  
CHAPMAN)

In the days of King Louis there was a poor juggler in France, a native of Compiègne, Barnaby by name, who went about from town to town performing feats of skill and strength.

On fair days he would unfold an old worn-out carpet in the public square, and when by means of a jovial address, which he had learned of a very ancient juggler, and which he never varied in the least, he had drawn together the children and loafers, he assumed extraordinary attitudes, and balanced a tin plate on the tip of his nose. At first the crowd would feign indifference.

But when, supporting himself on his hands face downwards, he threw into the air six copper balls, which glittered in the sunshine, and caught them again with his feet; or when throwing himself backwards until his heels and the nape of the neck met, giving his body the form of a perfect wheel, he would juggle in this posture with a dozen knives, a murmur of admiration would escape the spectators, and pieces of money rain down upon the carpet.

Nevertheless, like the majority of those who live by their wits, Barnaby of Compiègne had a great struggle to make a living.

Earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, he bore rather more than his share of the penalties consequent upon the misdoings of our father Adam.

Again, he was unable to work as constantly as he would have been willing to do. The warmth of the sun and the broad daylight were as necessary to enable him to display his brilliant parts as to the trees if flower and fruit should be expected of them. In winter time he was nothing more than a tree stripped of its leaves, and as it were dead. The frozen ground was hard to the juggler, and, like the grasshopper of which Marie de France tells us, the inclement season caused him to suffer both cold and hunger. But as he was simple-natured he bore his ills patiently.

He had never meditated on the origin of wealth, nor upon the inequality of human conditions. He believed firmly that if this life should prove hard, the life to come could not fail to redress the balance, and this hope upheld him. He did not resemble those thievish and miscreant Merry Andrews who sell their souls to the devil. He never blasphemed God's name; he lived uprightly, and although he had no wife of his own, he did not covet his neighbour's, since woman is ever the enemy of the strong man, as it appears by the history of Samson recorded in the Scriptures.

In truth, his was not a nature much disposed to carnal delights, and it was a greater deprivation to him to forsake the tankard than the Hebe who bore

it. For whilst not wanting in sobriety, he was fond of a drink when the weather waxed hot. He was a worthy man who feared God, and was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin.

Never did he fail on entering a church to fall upon his knees before the image of the Mother of God, and offer up this prayer to her:

“Blessed Lady, keep watch over my life until it shall please God that I die, and when I am dead, ensure to me the possession of the joys of paradise.”

## II

Now on a certain evening after a dreary wet day, as Barnaby pursued his road, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, on the watch for some barn where, though he might not sup, he might sleep, he perceived on the road, going in the same direction as himself, a monk, whom he saluted courteously. And as they walked at the same rate they fell into conversation with one another.

“Fellow traveller,” said the monk, “how comes it about that you are clothed all in green? Is it perhaps in order to take the part of a jester in some mystery play?”

“Not at all, good father,” replied Barnaby. “Such as you see me, I am called Barnaby, and for my calling I am a juggler. There would be no pleasanter calling in the world if it would always provide one with daily bread.”

"Friend Barnaby," returned the monk, "be careful what you say. There is no calling more pleasant than the monastic life. Those who lead it are occupied with the praises of God, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; and, indeed, religious life is one ceaseless hymn to the Lord."

Barnaby replied—

"Good father, I own that I spoke like an ignorant man. Your calling cannot be in any respect compared to mine, and although there may be some merit in dancing with a penny balanced on a stick on the tip of one's nose, it is not a merit which comes within hail of your own. Gladly would I, like you, good father, sing my office day by day, and especially the office of the most Holy Virgin, to whom I have vowed a singular devotion. In order to embrace the monastic life I would willingly abandon the art by which from Soissons to Beauvais I am well known in upwards of six hundred towns and villages."

The monk was touched by the juggler's simplicity, and as he was not lacking in discernment, he at once recognised in Barnaby one of those men of whom it is said in the Scriptures: Peace on earth to men of good will. And for this reason he replied—

"Friend Barnaby, come with me, and I will have you admitted into the monastery of which I am Prior. He who guided St. Mary of Egypt in the desert set me upon your path to lead you into the way of salvation."

It was in this manner, then, that Barnaby became a monk. In the monastery into which he was received the religious vied with one another in the



worship of the Blessed Virgin, and in her honour each employed all the knowledge and all the skill which God had given him.

The prior on his part wrote books dealing according to the rules of scholarship with the virtues of the Mother of God.

Brother Maurice, with a deft hand copied out these treatises upon sheets of vellum.

Brother Alexander adorned the leaves with delicate miniature paintings. Here were displayed the Queen of Heaven seated upon Solomon's throne, and while four lions were on guard at her feet, around the nimbus which encircled her head hovered seven doves, which are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, namely, of Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Strength, Counsel, Understanding, and Wisdom. For her companions she had six virgins with hair of gold, namely, Humility, Prudence, Seclusion, Submission, Virginity, and Obedience.

At her feet were two little naked figures, perfectly white, in an attitude of supplication. These were souls imploring her all-powerful intercession for their soul's health, and we may be sure not imploring in vain.

Upon another page facing this, Brother Alexander represented Eve, so that the Fall and the Redemption could be perceived at one and the same time—Eve the Wife abased, and Mary the Virgin exalted.

Furthermore, to the marvel of the beholder, this book contained presentments of the Well of Living Waters, the Fountain, the Lily, the Moon, the Sun, and the Garden Enclosed of which the Song of Songs.

tells us, the Gate of Heaven and the City of God, and all these things were symbols of the Blessed Virgin.

Brother Marbode was likewise one of the most loving children of Mary.

He spent all his days carving images in stone, so that his beard, his eyebrows, and his hair were white with dust, and his eyes continually swollen and weeping; but his strength and cheerfulness were not diminished, although he was now well gone in years, and it was clear that the Queen of Paradise still cherished her servant in his old age. Marbode represented her seated upon a throne, her brow encircled with an orb-shaped nimbus set with pearls. And he took care that the folds of her dress should cover the feet of her, concerning whom the prophet declared: My beloved is as a garden enclosed.

Sometimes, too, he depicted her in the semblance of a child full of grace, and appearing to say, "Thou art my God, even from my mother's womb."

In the priory, moreover, were poets who composed hymns in Latin, both in prose and verse, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and amongst the company was even a brother from Picardy who sang the miracles of Our Lady in rhymed verse and in the vulgar tongue.

### III

Being a witness of this emulation in praise and the glorious harvest of their labours, Barnaby mourned his own ignorance and simplicity.

“ Alas ! ” he sighed, as he took his solitary walk in the little shelterless garden of the monastery, “ wretched wight that I am, to be unable, like my brothers, worthily to praise the Holy Mother of God, to whom I have vowed my whole heart’s affection. Alas ! alas ! I am but a rough man and unskilled in the arts and I can render you in service, blessed Lady, neither edifying sermons, nor treatises set out in order according to rule, nor ingenious paintings, nor statues truthfully sculptured, nor verses whose march is measured to the beat of feet. No gift have I, alas ! ”

After this fashion he groaned and gave himself up to sorrow. But one evening, when the monks were spending their hour of liberty in conversation, he heard one of them tell the tale of a religious man who could repeat nothing other than the Ave Maria. This poor man was despised for his ignorance ; but after his death there issued forth from his mouth five roses in honour of the five letters of the name Mary (Marie), and thus his sanctity was made manifest.

Whilst he listened to this narrative Barnaby marvelled yet once again at the loving kindness of the Virgin ; but the lesson of that blessed death did not avail to console him, for his heart overflowed with zeal, and he longed to advance the glory of his Lady, who is in heaven.

How to compass this he sought but could find no way, and day by day he became the more cast down, when one morning he awakened filled full with joy, hastened to the chapel, and remained there alone for

more than an hour. After dinner he returned to the chapel once more.

And, starting from that moment, he repaired daily to the chapel at such hours as it was deserted, and spent within it a good part of the time which the other monks devoted to the liberal and mechanical arts. His sadness vanished, nor did he any longer groan.

A demeanour so strange awakened the curiosity of the monks.

These began to ask one another for what purpose Brother Barnaby could be indulging so persistently in retreat.

The prior, whose duty it is to let nothing escape him in the behaviour of his children in religion, resolved to keep a watch over Barnaby during his withdrawals to the chapel. One day, then, when he was shut up there after his custom, the prior, accompanied by two of the older monks, went to discover through the chinks in the door what was going on within the chapel.

They saw Barnaby before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, head downwards, with his feet in the air, and he was juggling with six balls of copper and a dozen knives. In honour of the Holy Mother of God he was performing those feats, which aforetime had won him most renown. Not recognising that the simple fellow was thus placing at the service of the Blessed Virgin his knowledge and skill, the two old monks exclaimed against the sacrilège.

The prior was aware how stainless was Barnaby's soul, but he concluded that he had been seized with

madness. They were all three preparing to lead him swiftly from the chapel, when they saw the Blessed Virgin descend the steps of the altar and advance to wipe away with a fold of her azure robe the sweat which was dropping from her juggler's forehead.

Then the prior, falling upon his face upon the pavement, uttered these words—

“Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God.”

“Amen!” responded the old brethren, and kissed the ground.

*Anatole France*

## THE FLAMING TINMAN

(FROM "LAVENGRO," CH. LXVIII)

"Well," said the tinker, after we had discoursed some time, "I little thought, when I first saw you, that you were of my own trade."

*Myself.* Nor am I, at least not exactly. There is not much difference, 'tis true, between a tinker and a smith.

*Tinker.* You are a whitesmith then?

*Myself.* Not I, I'd scorn to be anything so mean; no, friend, black's the colour; I am a brother of the horse-shoe. Success to the hammer and tongs.

*Tinker.* Well, I shouldn't have thought you had been a blacksmith by your hands.

*Myself.* I have seen them, however, as black as yours. The truth is, I have not worked for many a day.

*Tinker.* Where did you serve first?

*Myself.* In Ireland.

*Tinker.* That's a good way off, isn't it?

*Myself.* Not very far; over those mountains to the left, and the run of salt water that lies behind them, there's Ireland.

*Tinker.* It's a fine thing to be a scholar.

*Myself.* Not half so fine as to be a tinker.

*Tinker.* How you talk!

*Myself.* Nothing but the truth; what can be better than to be one's own master? Now a tinker is his own master, a scholar is not. Let us suppose the best of scholars, a schoolmaster for example, for I suppose you will admit that no one can be higher in scholarship than a schoolmaster; do you call his a pleasant life? I don't; we should call him a school-slave, rather than a schoolmaster. Only conceive him in blessed weather like this, in his close school, teaching children to write in copy-books, "Evil communication corrupts good manners," or "You cannot touch pitch without defilement," or to spell out of *Abedariums*, or to read out of *Jack Smith*, or *Sandford and Merton*. Only conceive him, I say, drudging in such guise from morning till night, without any rational enjoyment but to beat the children. Would you compare such a dog's life as that with your own—the happiest under heaven—true Eden life, as the Germans would say,—pitching your tent under the pleasant hedge-rows, listening to the song of the feathered tribes, collecting all the leaky kettles in the neighbourhood, soldering and joining, earning your honest bread by the wholesome sweat of your brow—making ten holes—hey, what's this? what's the man crying for?

Suddenly the tinker had covered his face with his hands, and began to sob and moan like a man in the deepest distress; the breast of his wife was

heaved with emotion; even the children were agitated, the youngest began to roar.

*Myself.* What's the matter with you; what are you all crying about?

*Tinker* (uncovering his face). Lord, why to hear you talk; isn't that enough to make anybody cry—even the poor babes? Yes, you said right, 'tis life in the Garden of Eden—the tinker's; I see so now that I'm about to give it up.

*Myself.* Give it up! you must not think of such a thing.

*Tinker.* No, I can't bear to think of it, and yet I must; what's to be done? How hard to be frightened to death, to be driven off the roads!

*Myself.* Who has driven you off the roads?

*Tinker.* Who! the Flaming Tinman.

*Myself.* Who is he?

*Tinker.* The biggest rogue in England, and the cruellest, or he wouldn't have served me as he has done—I'll tell you all about it. I was born upon the roads, and so was my father before me, and my mother too; and I worked with them as long as they lived, as a dutiful child, for I have nothing to reproach myself with on their account; and when my father died I took up the business, and went his beat, and supported my mother for the little time she lived; and when she died I married this young woman, who was not born upon the roads, but was a small tradesman's daughter, at Glo'ster. She had a kindness for me, and, notwithstanding her friends were against the match, she married the poor tinker, and came to live with him upon the roads. Well,



young man, for six or seven years I was the happiest fellow breathing, living just the life you described just now—respected by everybody in this beat; when in an evil hour comes this Black Jack, this Flaming Tinman, into these parts, driven as they say out of Yorkshire—for no good you may be sure. Now there is no beat will support two tinkers, as you doubtless know; mine was a good one, but it would not support the flying tinker and myself, though if it would have supported twenty it would have been all the same to the flying villain, who'll brook no one but himself; so he presently finds me out, and offers to fight me for the beat. Now, being bred upon the roads, I can fight a little, that is with anything like my match, but I was not going to fight him, who happens to be twice my size, and so I told him; whereupon he knocks me down, and would have done me further mischief had not some men been nigh and prevented him; so he threatened to cut my throat, and went his way. Well, I did not like such usage at all, and was woundily \* frightened, and tried to keep as much out of his way as possible, going anywhere but where I thought I was likely to meet him; and sure enough for several months I contrived to keep out of his way. At last somebody told me that he was gone back to Yorkshire, whereupon I was glad at heart, and ventured to show myself, going here and there as I did before. Well, young man, it was yesterday that I and mine set ourselves down in a lane, about five miles from here, and lighted our

\* Dreadfully

fire, and had our dinner, and after dinner I sat down to mend three kettles and a frying pan which the people in the neighbourhood had given me to mend—for, as I told you before, I have a good connection, owing to my honesty. Well, as I sat there hard at work, happy as the day's long, and thinking of anything but what was to happen, who should come up but this Black Jack, this king of the tinkers, rattling along in his cart, with his wife, that they call Gray Moll, by his side—for the villain has got a wife, and a maid-servant too; the last I never saw, but they that has, says that she is as big as a house, and young, and well to look at, which can't be all said of Moll, who, though she's big enough in all conscience, is neither young nor handsome. Well, no sooner does he see me and mine, than, giving the reins to Gray Moll, he springs out of his cart, and comes straight at me; not a word did he say, but on he comes straight at me like a wild bull. I am a quiet man, young fellow, but I saw now that quietness would be of no use, so I sprang up upon my legs, and being bred upon the roads, and able to fight a little, I squared as he came running in upon me, and had a round or two with him. Lord bless you, young man, it was like a fly fighting with an elephant—one of those big beasts the show-folks carry about. I had not a chance with the fellow, he knocked me here, he knocked me there, knocked me into the hedge, and knocked me out again. I was at my last shifts, and my poor wife saw it. Now my poor wife, though she is as gentle as a pigeon, has yet a spirit of her own, and though she wasn't bred upon the

roads, can scratch a little; so when she saw me at my last shifts, she flew at the villain—she couldn't bear to see her partner murdered—and scratched the villain's face. Lord bless you, young man, she had better have been quiet: Gray Moll no sooner saw what she was about, than springing out of the cart, where she had sat all along perfectly quiet, save a little whooping and screeching to encourage her blade:—Gray Moll, I say (my flesh creeps when I think of it—for I am a kind husband, and love my poor wife)—

*Myself.* Take another draught of the ale; you look frightened, and it will do you good. Stout liquor makes stout heart, as the man says in the play.

*Tinker.* That's true, young man; here's to you—where was I? Gray Moll no sooner saw what my wife was about, than springing out of the cart, she flew at my poor wife, clawed off her bonnet in a moment, and seized hold of her hair. Lord bless you, young man, my poor wife, in the hands of Gray Moll, was nothing better than a pigeon in the claws of a buzzard hawk, or I in the hands of the Flaming Tinman, which when I saw, my heart was fit to burst, and I determined to give up everything—everything to save my poor wife out of Gray Moll's claws. "Hold!" I shouted. "Hold, both of you—Jack, Moll. Hold, both of you, for God's sake, and I'll do what you will: give up trade, and business, connection, bread, and everything, never more travel the roads, and go down on my knees to you in the bargain." Well, this had some effect; Moll let go my wife, and the Blazing Tinman stopped for a moment;

it was only for a moment, however, that he left off—all of a sudden he hit me a blow which sent me against a tree; and what did the villain then? why the flying villain seized me by the throat, and almost throttled me, roaring—what do you think, young man, that the flaming villain roared out?

*Myself.* I really don't know—something horrible, I suppose.

*Tinker.* Horrible, indeed; you may well say horrible, young man; neither more nor less than the Bible—"A Bible, a Bible!" roared the Blazing Tinman; and he pressed my throat so hard against the tree that my senses began to dwaul away—a Bible, a Bible, still ringing in my ears. Now, young man, my poor wife is a Christian woman, and, though she travels the roads, carries a Bible with her at the bottom of her sack, with which sometimes she teaches the children to read—it was the only thing she brought with her from the place of her kith and kin, save her own body and the clothes on her back; so my poor wife, half distracted, runs to her sack, pulls out the Bible, and puts it into the hand of the Blazing Tinman, who then thrusts the end of it into my mouth with such fury that it made my lips bleed, and broke short one of my teeth which happened to be decayed. "Swear," said he, "swear, you mumping villain, take your Bible oath that you will quit and give up the beat altogether, or I'll"—and then the hard-hearted villain made me swear by the Bible, and my own damnation, half-throttled as I was, to—to—I can't go on—

*Myself.* Take another draught—stout liquor—

*Tinker.* I can't, young man, my heart's too full, and what's more, the pitcher is empty.

*Myself.* And so he swore you, I suppose, on the Bible, to quit the roads?

*Tinker.* You are right, he did so, the Gypsy villain.

*Myself.* Gypsy! Is he a Gypsy?

*Tinker.* Not exactly; what they call a half and half. His father was a Gypsy, and his mother, like mine, one who walked the roads.

*Myself.* Is he of the Smiths—the Petulengres?

*Tinker.* I say, young man, you know a thing or two; one would think, to hear you talk, you had been bred upon the roads. I thought none but those bred upon the roads knew anything of that name—Petulengres! No, not he, he fights the Petulengres whenever he meets them; he likes nobody but himself, and wants to be king of the roads. I believe he is a Boss,\* or a—at any rate he's a bad one, as I know to my cost.

*Myself.* And what are you going to do?

*Tinker.* Do! you may well ask that; I don't know what to do. My poor wife and I have been talking of that all the morning, over that half-pint mug of beer; we can't determine on what's to be done. All we know is, that we must quit the roads. The villain swore that the next time he saw us on the roads he'd cut all our throats, and seize our horse and

\* A branch of the great Gypsy family of Boswell have contracted the surname to Boss.

bit of a cart that are now standing out there under the tree.

*Myself.* And what do you mean to do with your horse and cart?

*Tinker.* Another question! What shall we do with our cart and pony? they are of no use to us now. Stay on the roads I will not, both for my oath's sake and my own. If we had a trifle of money, we were thinking of going to Bristol, where I might get up a little business, but we have none; our last three farthings we spent about the mug of beer.

*Myself.* But why don't you sell your horse and cart?

*Tinker.* Sell them, and who would buy them, unless some one who wished to set up in my line; but there's no beat, and what's the use of the horse and cart and the few tools without the beat?

*Myself.* I'm half inclined to buy your cart and pony, and your beat too.

*Tinker.* You! How came you to think of such a thing?

*Myself.* Why, like yourself, I hardly know what to do. I want a home and work. As for a home, I suppose I can contrive to make a home out of your tent and cart; and as for work, I must learn to be a tinker, it would not be hard for one of my trade to learn to tinker; what better can I do? Would you have me go to Chester and work there now? I don't like the thoughts of it. If I go to Chester and work there, I can't be my own man; I must work under a master, and perhaps he and I should quarrel, and when I quarrel I am apt to hit

folks, and those that hit folks are sometimes sent to prison; I don't like the thought either of going to Chester or to Chester prison. What do you think I could earn at Chester?

*Tinker.* A matter of eleven shillings a week, if anybody would employ you, which I don't think they would with those hands of yours. But whether they would or not, if you are of a quarrelsome nature, you must not go to Chester; you would be in the castle in no time. I don't know how to advise you. As for selling you my stock, I'd see you farther first, for your own sake.

*Myself.* Why?

*Tinker.* Why! you would get your head knocked off. Suppose you were to meet him?

*Myself.* Pooh, don't be afraid on my account; if I were to meet him I could easily manage him one way or other. I know all kinds of strange words and names, and, as I told you before, I sometimes hit people when they put me out.

Here the tinker's wife, who for some minutes past had been listening attentively to our discourse, interposed, saying, in a low soft tone: "I really don't see, John, why you shouldn't sell the young man the things, seeing that he wishes for them, and is so confident; you have told him plainly how matters stand, and if anything ill should befall him, people couldn't lay the blame on you; but I don't think any ill will befall him, and who knows but God has sent him to our assistance in time of need."

"I'll hear of no such thing," said the tinker; "I have drunk at the young man's expense, and

though he says he's quarrelsome, I would not wish to sit in pleasanter company. A pretty fellow I should be, now, if I were to let him follow his own will. If he once sets up on my beat, he's a lost man, his ribs will be stove in,\* and his head knocked off his shoulders. There, you are crying, but you shan't have your will, though; I won't be the young man's destruction —If, indeed, I thought he could manage the tinker—but he never can; he says he can hit, but it's no use hitting the tinker;—crying still! you are enough to drive one mad. I say, young man, I believe you understand a thing or two, just now you were talking of knowing hard words and names—I don't wish to send you to your mischief—you say you know hard words and names; let us see. Only on one condition I'll sell you the pony and things; as for the beat it's gone, isn't mine—sworn away by my own mouth. Tell me what's my name; if you can't, may I——"

*Myself.* Don't swear, it's a bad habit, neither pleasant nor profitable. Your name is Slingsby—Jack Slingsby. There, don't stare, there's nothing in my telling you your name: I've been in these parts before, at least not very far from here. Ten years ago, when I was little more than a child, I was about twenty miles from here in a post chaise, at the door of an inn,† and as I looked from the window of the chaise, I saw you standing by a gutter, with a big tin ladle in your hand, and somebody called you Jack

\* Crushed inwards.

† At Tanworth in May, 1812 (Knapp, i. 105).



Slingsby. I never forget anything I hear or see; I can't, I wish I could. So there's nothing strange in my knowing your name; indeed, there's nothing strange in anything, provided you examine it to the bottom. Now what am I to give you for the things?

I paid Slingsby five pounds ten shillings for his stock in trade, cart, and pony—purchased sundry provisions of the landlady, also a wagoner's frock, which had belonged to a certain son of hers, deceased, gave my little animal a feed of corn, and prepared to depart.

“God bless you, young man,” said Slingsby, shaking me by the hand, “you are the best friend I've had for many a day: I have but one thing to tell you. Don't cross that fellow's path if you can help it; and stay—should the pony refuse to go, just touch him so, and he'll fly like the wind.”

*George Borrow*

## THE SELFISH GIANT

Every afternoon, as they were coming from school, the children used to go and play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large lovely garden, with soft green grass. Here and there over the grass stood beautiful flowers like stars, and there were twelve peach trees that in the spring-time broke out into delicate blossoms of pink and pearl, and in the autumn bore rich fruit. The birds sat on the trees and sang so sweetly that the children used to stop their games in order to listen to them. "How happy we are here!" they cried to each other.

One day the Giant came back. He had been to visit his friend the Cornish ogre, and had stayed with him for seven years. After the seven years were over he had said all that he had to say, for his conversation was limited, and he determined to return to his own castle. When he arrived he saw the children playing in the garden.

"What are you doing here?" he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

"My own garden is my own garden," said the Giant; "any one can understand that, and I will

allow nobody to play in it but myself." So he built a high wall all round it, and put up a notice-board:

### TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children had now nowhere to play. They tried to play on the road, but the road was very dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. They used to wander round the high walls when their lessons were over, and talk about the beautiful garden inside. "How happy we were there!" they said to each other.

Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing in it as there were no children, and trees forgot to blossom. Once a beautiful flower put its head out from the grass, but when it saw the notice-board it was so sorry for the children that it slipped back into the ground again, and went off to sleep. The only people who were pleased were the Snow and the Frost. "Spring has forgotten this garden," they cried, "so we will live here all the year round." The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, and he came. He was wrapped in furs, and he roared all day about the garden, and blew the chimney-pots down. "This is a delightful spot," he said, "we must ask the Hail on a visit." So the Hail came. Every day for three hours he

rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the slates, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice.

"I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming," said the Selfish Giant, as he sat at the window and looked out at his cold white garden; "I hope there will be a change in the weather."

But the Spring never came, nor the Summer. The Autumn gave golden fruit to every garden, but to the Giant's garden she gave none. "He is too selfish," she said. So it was always winter there, and the North Wind and the Hail, and the Frost, and the Snow danced about through the trees.

One morning the Giant was lying awake in bed when he heard some lovely music. It sounded so sweet to his ears that he thought it must be the King's musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet singing outside his window, but it was so long since he had heard a bird sing in his garden that it seemed to him to be the most beautiful music in the world. Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring, and a delicious perfume came to him through the open casement. "I believe the Spring has come at last," said the Giant; and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

What did he see?

He saw a most wonderful sight. Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. In every tree that he could see there was a little child. And

the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads. The birds were flying about and twittering with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing. It was a lovely scene, only in one corner it was still winter. It was the farthest corner of the garden, and in it was standing a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of the tree, and he was wandering all round it, crying bitterly. The poor tree was still quite covered with frost and snow, and the North Wind was blowing and roaring above it. "Climb up! little boy," said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could; but the boy was too tiny.

And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. "How selfish I have been!" he said; "now I know why the Spring would not come here. I will put that poor little boy on the top of the tree, and then I will knock down the wall, and my garden shall be the children's playground for ever and ever." He was really very sorry for what he had done.

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him they were so frightened that they all ran away, and the garden became winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming. And the Giant stole up behind him and took him gently in his hand, and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the

birds came and sang on it, and the little boy stretched out his two arms and flung them round the Giant's neck, and kissed him. And the other children, when they saw that the Giant was not wicked any longer, came running back, and with them came the Spring. "It is your garden now, little children," said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. And when the people were going to market at twelve o'clock they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played, and in the evening they came to the Giant to bid him good-bye.

"But where is your little companion?" he said; "the boy I put into the tree." The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

"We don't know," answered the children; "he has gone away."

"You must tell him to be sure and come tomorrow," said the Giant. But the children said that they did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before; and the Giant felt very sad.

Every afternoon, when school was over, the children came and played with the Giant. But the little boy whom the Giant loved was never seen again. The Giant was very kind to all the children, yet he longed for his first little friend, and often spoke of him. "How I would like to see him!" he used to say.

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He could not play about any more, so he sat in a huge armchair, and watched the children

at their games, and admired his garden. "I have many beautiful flowers," he said; "but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all."

One winter morning he looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely the Spring asleep and that the flowers were resting.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes in wonder and looked and looked. It certainly was a marvellous sight. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were all golden, and silver fruit hung down from them, and underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden. He hastened across the grass, and came near to the child. And when he came quite close his face grew red with anger, and he said, "Who hath dared to wound thee?" For on the palms of the child's hands were the prints of two nails, and the prints of two nails were on the little feet.

"Who hath dared to wound thee?" cried the Giant; "tell me, that I may take my big sword and slay him."

"Nay!" answered the child; "but these are the wounds of Love."

"Who art thou?" said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, "You let me play once in your garden, to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise."

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

*Oscar Wilde*



## THE LORD OF CHATEAU NOIR

It was in the days when the German armies had broken their way across France, and when the shattered forces of the young Republic had been swept away to the north of the Aisne and to the south of the Loire. Three broad streams of armed men had rolled slowly but irresistibly from the Rhine, now meandering to the north, now to the south, dividing, coalescing but all uniting to form one great lake round Paris. And from this lake there welled out smaller streams—one to the north, one southward to Orleans, and a third westward to Normandy. Many a German trooper saw the sea for the first time when he rode his horse girth-deep into the waves at Dieppe.

Black and bitter were the thoughts of Frenchmen when they saw this weal of dishonour slashed across the fair face of their country. They had fought and they had been overborne. That swarming cavalry, those countless footmen, the masterful guns—they had tried and tried to make head against them. In battalions their invaders were not to be beaten, but man to man, or ten to ten, they were their equals.

A brave Frenchman might still make a single German rue the day that he had left his own bank of the Rhine. Thus, unchronicled amid the battles and the sieges, there broke out another war, a war of individuals, with foul murder upon the one side and brutal reprisal on the other.

Colonel von Gramm, of the 24th Posen Infantry, had suffered severely during this new development. He commanded in the little Norman town of Les Andelys, and his outposts stretched amid the hamlets and farmhouses of the district round. No French force was within fifty miles of him, and yet morning after morning he had to listen to a black report of sentries found dead at their posts, or of foraging parties which had never returned. Then the colonel would go forth in his wrath, and farmsteads would blaze and villages tremble; but next morning there was still that same dismal tale to be told. Do what he might, he could not shake off his invisible enemies. And yet it should not have been so hard, for from certain signs in common, in the plan and in the deed, it was certain that all these outrages came from a single source.

Colonel von Gramm had tried violence, and it had failed. Gold might be more successful. He published it abroad over the countryside that 500 frs. would be paid for information. There was no response. Then 800 frs. The peasants were incorruptible. Then, goaded on by a murdered corporal, he rose to a thousand, and so bought the soul of François Rejane, farm labourer, whose Norman

avarice was a stronger passion than his French hatred.

"You say that you know who did these crimes?" asked the Prussian colonel eyeing with loathing the blue-bloused, rat-faced creature before him.

"Yes, colonel."

"And it was——?"

"Those thousand francs, colonel——"

"Not a sou until your story has been tested. Come! Who is it who has murdered my men?"

"It is Count Eustace of Château Noir."

"You lie!" cried the colonel, angrily.

"A gentleman and a nobleman could not have done such crimes."

The peasant shrugged his shoulders.

"It is evident to me that you do not know the count. It is this way, colonel. What I tell you is the truth, and I am not afraid that you should test it. The Count of Château Noir is a hard man, even at the best time he was a hard man. But of late he has been terrible. It was his son's death, you know. His son was under Douay, and he was taken, and then in escaping from Germany he met his death. It was the count's only child, and indeed we all think that it has driven him mad. With his peasants he follows the German armies. I do not know how many he has killed, but it is he who cut the cross upon the foreheads, for it is the badge of his house."

It was true. The murdered sentries had each had a saltire cross flashed across their brows, as by a hunting-knife. The colonel bent his stiff back and

ran his forefinger over the map which lay upon the table.

"The Château Noir is not more than four leagues," he said.

"Three and a kilometre, colonel."

"You know the place?"

"I used to work there."

Colonel von Gramm rang the bell.

"Give this man food and detain him," said he to the sergeant.

"Why detain me, colonel? I can tell you no more."

"We shall need you as guide."

"As guide! But the count? If I were to fall into his hands? Ah, colonel——"

The Prussian commander waved him away. "Send Captain Baumgarten to me at once," said he.

The officer who answered the summons was a man of middle-age, heavy-jawed, blue-eyed, with a curving yellow moustache, and a brick-red face which turned to an ivory white where his helmet had sheltered it. He was bald, with a shining, tightly stretched scalp, at the back of which, as in a mirror, it was a favourite mess-joke of the subalterns to trim their moustaches. As a soldier he was slow, but reliable and brave. The colonel could trust him where a more dashing officer might be in danger.

"You will proceed to Château Noir to-night, captain," said he. "A guide has been provided. You will arrest the count and bring him back. If there is an attempt at rescue, shoot him at once."

"How many men shall I take, colonel?"

"Well we are surrounded by spies, and our only chance is to pounce upon him before he knows that we are on the way. A large force will attract attention. On the other hand, you must not risk being cut off."

"I might march north, colonel, as if to join General Goeben. Then I could turn down this road which I see upon your map, and get to Château Noir before they could hear of us. In that case, with twenty men——"

"Very good, captain. I hope to see you with your prisoner to-morrow morning."

It was a cold December night when Captain Baumgarten marched out of Les Andelys with his twenty Poseners, and took the main road to the north-west. Two miles out he turned suddenly down a narrow, deeply rutted track, and made swiftly for his man. A thin, cold rain was falling, swishing among the tall poplar trees, and rustling in the fields on either side. The captain walked first with Moser, a veteran sergeant, beside him. The sergeant's wrist was fastened to that of the French peasant, and it had been whispered in his ear that in case of an ambush the first bullet fired would be through his head. Behind them the twenty infantrymen plodded along through the darkness with their faces sunk to the rain, and their boots squeaking in the soft, wet clay. They knew where they were going, and why, and the thought upheld them, for they were bitter at the loss of their comrades. It was a cavalry job, they knew, but the cavalry were all on with the

advance, and, besides, it was more fitting that the regiment should avenge its own dead men.

It was nearly eight when they left Les Andelys. At half-past eleven their guide stopped at a place where two high pillars, crowned with some heraldic stonework, flanked a huge iron gate. The wall in which it had been the opening had crumbled away, but the great gate still towered above the brambles and weeds which had overgrown its base. The Prussians made their way round it, and advanced stealthily, under the shadow of a tunnel of oak branches, up the long avenue, which was still cumbered by the leaves of last autumn. At the top they halted and reconnoitred.

The black château lay in front of them. The moon had shone out between two rain-clouds, and threw the old house into silver and shadow. It was shaped like an L, with a low arched door in front, and lines of small windows like the open ports of a man-of-war. Above was a dark roof, breaking at the corners into little round overhanging turrets, the whole lying silent in the moonshine, with a drift of ragged clouds blackening the heavens behind it. A single light gleamed in one of the lower windows.

The captain whispered his orders to his men. Some were to creep to the front door, some to the back. Some were to watch the east, and some the west. He and the sergeant stole on tiptoe to the lighted window.

It was a small room into which they looked, very meanly furnished. An elderly man, in the dress of a menial, was reading a tattered paper by the light of

a guttering candle. He leaned back in his wooden chair with his feet upon a box, while a bottle of white wine stood with a half-filled tumbler upon a stool beside him. The sergeant thrust his needle-gun through the glass, and the man sprang to his feet with a shriek.

“ Silence, for your life ! The house is surrounded, and you cannot escape. Come round and open the door, or we will show you no mercy when we come in.”

“ For God’s sake, don’t shoot ! I will open it ! I will open it !” He rushed from the room with his paper still crumpled up in his hand. An instant later, with a groaning of old locks and a rasping of bars, the low door swung open, and the Prussians poured into the stone-flagged passage.

“ Where is Count Eustace de Château Noir ?”

“ My master ! He is out, sir.”

“ Out at this time of night ? Your life for a lie !”

“ It is true, sir. He is out !”

“ Where ?”

“ I do not know.”

“ Doing what ?”

“ I cannot tell. No, it is no use your cocking your pistol, sir. You may kill me, but you cannot make me tell you that which I do not know.”

“ Is he often out at this hour ?”

“ Frequently.”

“ And when does he come home ?”

“ Before daybreak.”

Captain Baumgarten rasped out a German oath. He had had his journey for nothing, then. The man's answers were only too likely to be true. It was what he might have expected. But at least he would search the house and make sure. Leaving a picket at the front door and another at the back, the sergeant and he drove the trembling butler in front of them—his shaking candle sending strange, flickering shadows over the old tapestries and the low, oak-raftered ceilings. They searched the whole house, from the huge, stone-flagged kitchen below to the dining-hall on the second floor, with its gallery for musicians, and its panelling black with age, but nowhere was there a living creature. Up above, in an attic, they found Marie, the elderly wife of the butler; but the owner kept no other servants, and of his own presence there was no trace.

It was long, however, before Captain Baumgarten had satisfied himself upon the point. It was a difficult house to search. Thin stairs, which only one man could ascend at a time, connected lines of tortuous corridors. The walls were so thick that each room was cut off from its neighbour. Huge fireplaces yawned in each, while the windows were 6 ft. deep in the wall. Captain Baumgarten stamped with his feet, tore down curtains, and struck with the pommel of his sword. If there were secret hiding-places, he was not fortunate enough to find them.

"I have an idea," said he, at last, speaking in German to the sergeant. "You will place a guard over this fellow, and make sure that he communicates with no one."



" Yes, captain."

" And you will place four men in ambush at the front and at the back. It is likely enough that about daybreak our bird may return to the nest."

" And the others, captain?"

" Let them have their suppers in the kitchen. This fellow will serve you with meat and wine. It is a wild night, and we shall be better here than on the country road."

" And yourself, captain?"

" I will take my supper up here in the dining-hall. The logs are laid and we can light the fire. You will call me if there is any alarm. What can you give me for supper—you?"

" Alas, monsieur, there was a time when I might have answered, ' What you wish!' but now it is all that we can do to find a bottle of new claret and a cold pullet."

" That will do very well. Let a guard go about with him, sergeant, and let him feel the end of a bayonet if he plays us any tricks."

Captain Baumgarten was an old campaigner. In the Eastern provinces, and before that in Bohemia, he had learned the art of quartering himself upon the enemy. While the butler brought his supper he occupied himself in making his preparations for a comfortable night. He lit the candelabrum of ten candles upon the centre table. The fire was already burning up, crackling merrily, and sending spurts of blue, pungent smoke into the room. The captain walked to the window and looked out. The moon had gone in again, and it was raining heavily. He

could hear the deep sough of the wind, and see the dark loom of the trees, all swaying in the one direction. It was a sight which gave a zest to his comfortable quarters, and to the cold fowl and the bottle of wine which the butler had brought up for him. He was tired and hungry after his long tramp, so he threw his sword, his helmet, and his revolver-belt down upon a chair, and fell to eagerly upon his supper. Then with his glass of wine before him and his cigar between his lips, he tilted his chair back and looked about him./

He sat within a small circle of brilliant light which gleamed upon his silver shoulder-straps, and threw out his terra-cotta face, his heavy eyebrows, and his yellow moustache. But outside that circle things were vague and shadowy in the old dining-hall. Two sides were oak-panelled and two were hung with faded tapestry, across which huntsmen and dogs and stags were still dimly streaming. Above the fireplace were rows of heraldic shields with the blazonings of the family and of its alliances, the fatal saltire cross breaking out on each of them.

Four paintings of old seigneurs of Château Noir faced the fireplace, all men with hawk noses and bold, high features, so like each other that only the dress could distinguish the Crusader from the Cavalier of the Fronde. Captain Baumgarten, heavy with his repast, lay back in his chair looking up at them through the clouds of his tobacco smoke, and pondering over the strange chance which had sent him, a man from the Baltic coast, to eat his supper in the ancestral hall of these proud Norman chieftains. But

the fire was hot, and the captain's eyes were heavy. His chin sank slowly upon his chest, and the ten candles gleamed upon the broad, white scalp.

Suddenly a slight noise brought him to his feet. For an instant it seemed to his dazed senses that one of the pictures opposite had walked from its frame. There, beside the table, and almost within arm's length of him, was standing a huge man, silent, motionless, with no sign of life save his fierce, glinting eyes. He was black-haired, olive-skinned, with a pointed tuft of black beard, and a great, fierce nose, towards which all his features seemed to run. His cheeks were wrinkled like a last year's apple, but his sweep of shoulder, and bony, corded hands, told of a strength which was unsapped by age. His arms were folded across his arching chest, and his mouth was set in a fixed smile.

"Pray do not trouble yourself to look for your weapons," he said, as the Prussian cast a swift glance at the empty chair in which they had been laid. "You have been, if you will allow me to say so, a little indiscreet to make yourself so much at home in a house every wall of which is honeycombed with secret passages. You will be amused to hear that forty men were watching you at your supper. Ah! what then?"

Captain Baumgarten had taken a step forward with clenched fists. The Frenchman held up the revolver which he grasped in his right hand, while with the left he hurled the German back into his chair.

" Pray keep your seat," said he. " You have no cause to trouble about your men. They have already been provided for. It is astonishing with these stone floors how little one can hear what goes on beneath. You have been relieved of your command, and have now only to think of yourself. May I ask what your name is?"

" I am Captain Baumgarten, of the 24th Posen Regiment."

" Your French is excellent, though you incline, like most of your countrymen to turn the 'p' into a 'b.' I have been amused to hear them cry '*Avez bitié sur moi!*' You know, doubtless, who it is who addresses you."

" The Count of Château Noir."

" Precisely. It would have been a misfortune if you had visited my château and I had been unable to have a word with you. I have had to do with many German soldiers, but never with an officer before. I have much to talk to you about."

Captain Baumgarten sat still in his chair. Brave as he was, there was something in this man's manner which made his skin creep with apprehension. His eyes glanced to right and to left, but his weapons were gone, and in a struggle he saw that he was but a child to this gigantic adversary. The count had picked up the claret bottle and held it to the light.

" Tut! tut!" said he. " And was this the best that Pierre could do for you? I am ashamed to look you in the face, Captain Baumgarten. We must improve upon this."

He blew a call upon a whistle which hung from his shooting-jacket. The old manservant was in the room in an instant.

“Chambertin from bin 15!” he cried, and a minute later a grey bottle, streaked with cobwebs, was carried in as a nurse bears an infant. The count filled two glasses to the brim.

“Drink!” said he. “It is the very best in my cellars, and not to be matched between Rouen and Paris. Drink, sir, and be happy! There are cold joints below. There are two lobsters, fresh from Honfleur. Will you not venture upon a second and more savoury supper?”

The German officer shook his head. He drained the glass, however, and his host filled it once more, pressing him to give an order for this or that dainty.

“There is nothing in my house which is not at your disposal. You have but to say the word. Well, then, you will allow me to tell you a story while you drink your wine. I have so longed to tell it to some German officer. It is about my son, my only child, Eustace, who was taken and died in escaping. It is a curious little story, and I think that I can promise you that you will never forget it/

“You must know, then, that my boy was in the artillery—a fine young fellow, Captain Baumgarten, and the pride of his mother. She died within a week of the news of his death reaching us. It was brought by a brother officer who was at his side throughout, and who escaped, while my lad died. I want to tell you all that he told me.

“ Eustace was taken at Weissenburg on the 4th of August. The prisoners were broken up into parties, and sent back into Germany by different routes. Eustace was taken upon the 5th to a village called Lauterburg, where he met with kindness from the German officer in command. This good colonel had the hungry lad to supper, offered him the best he had, opened a bottle of good wine, as I have tried to do for you, and gave him a cigar from his own case. Might I entreat you to take one from mine?”

The German again shook his head. His horror of his companion had increased as he sat watching the lips that smiled and the eyes that glared.

“ The colonel,” as I say, “ was good to my boy. But unluckily, the prisoners were moved next day across the Rhine into Ettlingen. They were not equally fortunate there. The officer who guarded them was a ruffian and a villain, Captain Baumgarten. He took a pleasure in humiliating and ill-treating the brave men who had fallen into his power. That night, upon my son answering fiercely back to some taunt of his, he struck him in the eye, like this!”

The crash of the blow rang through the hall. The German’s face fell forward, his hand up, and blood oozing through his fingers. The count settled down in his chair once more.

“ My boy was disfigured by the blow. and this villain made his appearance the object of his jeers. By the way, you look a little comical yourself at the present moment, captain, and your colonel would certainly say that you had been getting into mischief. To continue, however, my boy’s youth and his desti-

tution—for his pockets were empty—moved the pity of a kind-hearted major, and he advanced him ten Napoleons from his own pocket without security of any kind. Into your hands, Captain Baumgarten, I return these ten gold pieces, since I cannot learn the name of the lender. I am grateful from my heart for this kindness shown to my boy.

“The vile tyrant who commanded the escort accompanied the prisoners to Durlack, and from there to Carlsruhe. He heaped every outrage upon my lad, because the spirit of the Château Noirs would not stoop to turn away his wrath by a feigned submission. Ay, this cowardly villain, whose heart’s blood shall yet clot upon this hand, dared to strike my son with his open hand, to kick him, to tear hairs from his moustache—to use him thus—and thus and thus!”

The German writhed and struggled. He was helpless in the hands of this huge giant whose blows were raining upon him. When at last, blinded and half-senseless, he staggered to his feet, it was only to be hurled back again into the great oaken chair. He sobbed in his impotent anger and shame.

“My boy was frequently moved to tears by the humiliation of his position,” continued the count. “You will understand me when I say that it is a bitter thing to be helpless in the hands of an insolent and remorseless enemy. On arriving at Carlsruhe, however, his face, which had been wounded by the brutality of his guard, was bound up by a young Bavarian subaltern who was touched by his appearance. I regret to see that your eye is bleeding so.

Will you permit me to bind it with my silk handkerchief?"

He leaned forward, but the German dashed his hand aside.

"I am in your power, you monster!" he cried; "I can endure your brutalities, but not your hypocrisy."

The count shrugged his shoulders.

"I am taking things in their order, just as they occurred," said he. "I was under vow to tell it to the first German officer with whom I could talk *tête-à-tête*. Let me see, I had got as far as the young Bavarian at Carlsruhe. I regret extremely that you will not permit me to use such slight skill in surgery as I possess. At Carlsruhe, my lad was shut up in the old caserne, where he remained for a fortnight. The worst pang of his captivity was that some unmannerly curs in the garrison would taunt him with his position as he sat by his window in the evening. That reminds me, captain, that you are not quite situated upon a bed of roses yourself, are you now? You came to trap a wolf, my man, and now the beast has you down with his fangs in your throat. A family man, too, I should judge, by that well-filled tunic. Well, a widow the more will make little matter, and they do not usually remain widows long. Get back into the chair, you dog!

"Well, to continue my story—at the end of a fortnight my son and his friend escaped. I need not trouble you with the dangers which they ran, or with the privations which they endured. Suffice it that to disguise themselves they had to take the clothes of



two peasants, whom they waylaid in a wood. Hiding by day and travelling by night, they had got as far into France as Remilly, and were within a mile—a single mile, captain—of crossing the German lines when a patrol of Uhlans came right upon them. Ah! it was hard, was it not, when they had come so far and were so near to safety?" The count blew a double call upon his whistle, and three hard-faced peasants entered the room.

"These must represent my Uhlans," said he. "Well, then, the captain in command, finding that these men were French soldiers in civilian dress within the German lines, proceeded to hang them without trial or ceremony. I think, Jean, that the centre beam is the strongest."

The unfortunate soldier was dragged from his chair to where a noosed rope had been flung over one of the huge oaken rafters which spanned the room. The cord was slipped over his head, and he felt its harsh grip round his throat. The three peasants seized the other end, and looked to the count for his orders. The officer, pale, but firm, folded his arms and stared defiantly at the man who tortured him.

"You are now face to face with death, and I perceive from your lips that you are praying. My son was also face to face with death, and he prayed, also. It happened that a general officer came up, and he heard the lad praying for his mother, and it moved him so—he being himself a father—that he ordered his Uhlans away, and he remained with his aide-de-camp only, beside the condemned men. And when he heard all the lad had to tell—that he was the only

child of an old family, and that his mother was in failing health—he threw off the rope as I throw off this, and he kissed him on either cheek, as I kiss you, and he bade him go, as I bid you go, and may every kind wish of that noble general, though it could not stave off the fever which slew my son, descend now upon your head.”

And so it was that Captain Baumgarten, disfigured, blinded, and bleeding, staggered out into the wind and the rain of that wild December dawn.

*Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

## THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF VIKRAMADITYA

For many centuries in Indian history there was no city so famous as the city of Ujjain. It was always renowned as the seat of learning. Here lived at one time the poet Kalidas, one of the supreme poets of the world, fit to be named with Homer and Dante and Shakespeare. And here worked and visited, only a hundred and fifty years ago, an Indian king, who was also a great and learned astronomer, the greatest of his day, Rajah Jey Singh of Jeypore. So one can see what a great love all who care for India must feel for the ancient city of Ujjain.

2 But deep in the hearts of the Indian people, one name is held even dearer than those I have mentioned—the name of Vikramaditya, who became King of Malwa, it is said, in the year 57 before Christ. How many, many years ago must that be! But so clearly is he remembered, that to this day when a Hindu wants to write a letter, after putting something religious at the top—‘The Name of the Lord,’ or ‘Call on the Lord,’ or something of the sort—and after writing his address, as we all do in beginning a letter, when he states the *date*, he would not say, ‘of the year of the Lord 1900,’ for instance, meaning 1900 years after Christ, as we might, but he would say ‘of

the year 1957 of *the Era of Vikramaditya*.\* So we can judge for ourselves whether that name is ever likely to be forgotten in India. Now who was this Vikramaditya, and why was he so loved? The whole of that secret, after so long a time, we can scarcely hope to recover. He was like our King Arthur, or like Alfred the Great—so strong and true and gentle that the men of his own day almost worshipped him, and those of all after times were obliged to give him the first place, though they had never looked in his face, nor appealed to his great and tender heart—simply because they could see that never king had been loved like this king. But one thing we do know about Vikramaditya. It is told of him that he was the greatest judge in history.

3 Never was he deceived. Never did he punish the wrong man. The guilty trembled when they came before him, for they knew that his eyes would look straight into their guilt. And those who had difficult questions to ask, and wanted to know the truth, were thankful to be allowed to come, for they knew that their King would never rest till he understood the matter, and that then he would give an answer that would convince all.

4 And so, in after time in India, when any judge pronounced sentence with great skill, it would be said of him 'Ah, he must have sat in the judgment-seat of Vikramaditya!' And this was the habit of speech of the whole country. Yet in Ujjain itself, the poor people forgot that the heaped-up ruins a few

\* The name of this era is *Samvat*.

miles away had been his palace, and only the rich and learned, and the wise men who lived in "kings' courts, remembered.

5 The story I am about to tell you happened long, long ago; but yet there had been time for the old palace and fortress of Ujjain to fall into ruins, and for the sand to be heaped up over them, covering the blocks of stone, and bits of old wall, often with grass and dust, and even trees. There had been time, too, for the people to forget.

6 In those days, the people of the villages, as they do still, used to send their cows out to the wild land to graze.

7 Early in the morning they would go, in the care of the shepherds, and not return till evening, close on dusk. How I wish I could show you that coming and going of the Indian cows!

8 Such gentle little creatures they are, with such large wise eyes, and a great hump between their shoulders! And they are not timid or wild, like our cattle. For in India, amongst the Hindus, every one loves them. They are very useful and precious in that hot, dry country, and no one is allowed to tease or frighten them. Instead of that, the little girls come at daybreak and pet them, giving them food and hanging necklaces of flowers about their necks, saying poetry to them, and even strewing flowers before their feet! And the cows, for their part, seem to feel as if they belonged to the family, just as our cats and dogs do.

9 If they live in the country, they delight in being taken out to feed on the grass in the daytime; but

of course some one must go with them, to frighten off wild beasts, and to see that they do not stray too far. They wear little tinkling bells, that ring as they move their heads, saying, 'Here! here!' And when it is time to go home to the village for the night, what a pretty sight they make!

16 One cowherd stands and calls at the edge of the pasture and another goes around behind the cattle, to drive them towards him, and so they come quietly forward from here and there, sometimes breaking down the brushwood in their path. And when the herdsmen are sure that all are safe, they turn homewards—one leading in front, one bringing up the rear, and the cows making a long procession between them. As they go they kick up the dust along the sun-baked path, till at last they seem to be moving through a cloud, with the last rays of the sunset touching it. And so the Indian people call twilight, cowdust, 'the hour of cowdust.' It is a very peaceful, a very lovely moment. All about the village can be heard the sound of the children playing. The men are seated, talking, round the foot of some old tree, and the women are gossiping or praying in their houses.

17 To-morrow, before dawn, all will be up and hard at work again, but this is the time of rest and joy.

18 Such was the life of the shepherd boys in the villages about Ujjain. There were many of them, and in the long days on the pastures they had plenty of time for fun. One day they found a playground. Oh, how delightful it was! The ground under the trees was rough and uneven. Here and there the end

of a great stone peeped out, and many of these stones were beautifully carven. In the middle was a green mound, looking just like a judge's seat.

13 One of the boys thought so at least, and he ran forward with a whoop and seated himself on it. 'I say, boys,' he cried, 'I'll be judge and you can all bring cases before me, and we'll have trials!' Then he straightened his face, and became very grave, to act the part of judge.

14 The others saw the fun at once, and, whispering amongst themselves, quickly made up some quarrel, and appeared before him, saying very humbly, 'May your worship be pleased to settle between my neighbour and me which is in the right?' Then they stated the case, one saying that a certain field was his, another that it was not, and so on.

15 But now a strange thing made itself felt. When the judge had sat down on the mound, he was just a common boy. But when he had heard the question, even to the eyes of the frolicsome lads, he seemed quite different. He was now full of gravity, and, instead of answering in fun, he took the case seriously, and gave an answer which in that particular case was perhaps the wisest that man had ever heard.

16 The boys were a little frightened. For though they could not appreciate the judgment, yet his tone and manner were strange and impressive. Still they thought it was fun, and went away again, and, with a good deal more whispering, concocted another case. Once more they put it to their judge, and once more he gave a reply, as it were out of the depth of a long experience, with incontrovertible wisdom. And this

went on for hours and hours, he sitting on the judge's seat, listening to the questions propounded by the others, and always pronouncing sentence with the same wonderful gravity and power. Till at last it was time to take the cows home, and then he jumped down from his place, and was just like any other cowherd.

17. The boys could never forget that day, and whenever they heard of any perplexing dispute they would set this boy on the mound, and put it to him. And always the same thing happened. The spirit of knowledge and justice would come to him, and he would show them the truth. But when he came down from his seat, he would be no different from other boys.

18. Gradually the news of this spread through the country-side, and grown-up men and women from all the villages about that part would bring their law-suits to be decided in the court of the herd-boys on the grass under the green trees. And always they received a judgment that both sides understood, and went away satisfied. So all the disputes in that neighbourhood were settled.

19. Now Ujjain had long ceased to be a capital, and the King now lived very far away, hence it was some time before he heard the story. At last, however, it came to his ears. 'Why,' he said, 'that boy must have sat on the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya!' He spoke without thinking, but all around him were learned men, who knew the chronicles. They looked at one another. 'The King speaks truth,'



they said; ' the ruins in yonder meadows were once Vikramaditya's palace!'

20 Now this sovereign had long desired to be possessed with the spirit of law and justice. Every day brought its problems and difficulties to him, and he often felt weak and ignorant in deciding matters that needed wisdom and strength. ' If sitting on the mound brings it to the shepherd boy,' he thought, ' let us dig deep and find the Judgment-Seat. I shall put it in the chief place in my hall of audience, and on it I shall sit to hear all cases. Then the spirit of Vikramaditya will descend on me also, and I shall always be a just judge!'

21 So men with spades and tools came to disturb the ancient peace of the pastures, and the grassy knoll where the boys had played was overturned. All about the spot were now heaps of earth and broken wood and upturned sod. And the cows had to be driven further afield. But the heart of the boy who had been judge was sorrowful, as if the very home of his soul were being taken away from him.

22 At last the labourers came on something. They uncovered it—a slab of black marble, supported on the hands and outspread wings of twenty-five stone angels, with their faces turned outwards as if for flight—surely the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya.

23 With great rejoicing it was brought to the city, and the King himself stood by while it was put in the chief place in the hall of justice. Then the nation was ordered to observe three days of prayer and fasting, for on the fourth day the King would ascend

the new throne publicly, and judge justly amongst the people.

24. At last the great morning arrived, and crowds assembled to see the Taking of the Seat. Pacing through the long hall came the judges and priests of the kingdom, followed by the sovereign. Then, as they reached the Throne of Judgment, they parted into two lines, and he walked up the middle, prostrated himself before it, and went close up to the marble slab.

25. When he had done this, however, and was just about to sit down, one of the twenty-five stone angels began to speak. 'Stop!' it said: 'Thinkest thou that thou art worthy to sit on the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya? Hast thou never desired to bear rule over kingdoms that were not thine own?' And the countenance of the stone angel was full of sorrow.

26. At these words the King felt as if a light had blazed up within him, and shown him a long array of tyrannical wishes. He knew that his own life was unjust. After a long pause he spoke. 'No,' he said, 'I am *not* worthy.'

27. 'Fast and pray yet three days,' said the angel, 'that thou mayest purify thy will, and make good thy right to seat thyself thereon.' And with these words it spread its wings and flew away. And when the King lifted up his face, the place of the speaker was empty, and only twenty-four figures supported the marble slab.

And so there was another three days of royal retreat, and he prepared himself with prayer and

with fasting to come again and essay to sit on the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya.

But this time it was even as before. Another stone angel addressed him, and asked him a question which was yet more searching. 'Hast thou *never*,' it said, 'coveted the riches of another?'

And when at last he spoke and said, 'Yea, I have done this thing; I am not worthy to sit on the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya!' the angel commanded him to fast and pray yet another three days, and spread its wings and flew away into the blue.

At last four times twenty-four days had gone, and still three more days of fasting, and it was now the hundredth day. Only one angel was left supporting the marble slab, and the King drew near with great confidence, for to-day he felt sure of being allowed to take his place.

But as he drew near and prostrated, the last angel spoke: 'Art thou, then, perfectly pure in heart, O King?' it said. 'Is thy will like unto that of a little child? If so, thou art indeed worthy to sit on this seat!'

'No,' said the King, speaking very slowly, and once more searching his own conscience, as the judge examines the prisoner at the bar, but with great sadness; 'no, I am not worthy.'

And at these words the angel flew up into the air, bearing the slab upon its head, so that never since that day has it been seen upon the earth.

But when the King came to himself and was alone, pondering over the matter, he saw that the last angel had explained the mystery. Only he who

was pure in heart, like a little child, could be perfectly just. That was why the shepherd boy in the forest could sit where no king in the world might come, on the Judgment-Seat of Vikramaditya.

*Sister Nivedita*

## AKBAR

Akbar was the grandson of that joyous and superb adventurer Babur, who, inheriting the throne of a small, though delectable, country in the middle of Asia, spent his life in fighting for a grander throne; he ended by swooping down on Hindostan and conquering there a great dominion. His son Humayun held this precariously till he was driven out by rival rulers of Afghan race; after years of exile he won back his throne, only to die. Humayun's son, Akbar, then but a boy, had to fight for his inheritance. He secured it; and then, piece by piece, kingdom by kingdom, he annexed in an almost incessant series of wars the countries surrounding his frontiers, till his empire stretched from sea to sea. Except for that southern portion of India called the Deccan, he became master of India.

Such was his achievement as conqueror. His greater achievement as a ruler was to weld this collection of different states, different races, different religions, into a whole. It was accomplished by elaborate organisation—Akbar had an extraordinary genius for detail—still more by the settled policy which persuaded his subjects of the justice of their ruler. Akbar's conceptions were something new in

the history of Asiatic conquerors. Though a foreigner, he identified himself with the India he had conquered. And much of his system was to be permanent. The principles and practice worked out by Akbar and his ministers, were largely adopted into the English system of government.

Yet Akbar's achievements are transcended in interest by the man himself. And it is the portrait of the man rather than the story of his doings with which we shall be most concerned. The full record of his conquest and administration can be read in the pages of Mr. Vincent Smith's *Akbar, the Great Mogul*: a volume which has its faults and which is sometimes curiously unjust to its hero, but in which is collected a vast amount of solid information. The chief original authority is the *Akbar-namah*, the *Story of Akbar*, written in Persian by the Emperor's friend and minister, Abul Fazl. There are other Indian histories. But of greater interest to us, perhaps, are the vivid accounts given by the Jesuits who stayed at Akbar's court and sometimes accompanied him on his expeditions.

Hardly any one so conspicuously eminent in history is so plainly set before our eyes, or has so actual a presence in our imagination. The detailed records of his daily life, no less than of his achievements, are corroborated not only by numerous portraits but by a long series of small paintings (very many of which are now in England), in which his manifold activities are vividly depicted. We have him before our eyes in his prime of life. He is compact of frame, muscular, rather burly; of moderate stature, but

broad-shouldered; neither lean nor stout; of a healthy complexion, the colour of ripe wheat. His eyes, rather small, but with long lashes, sparkle like the points of light on little waves when they catch the sun. He wears moustaches, but no beard. His voice is loud and full. When he laughs, it is with his whole face. His movements are quick, though from much riding in his youth he is slightly bow-legged. He carries his head a little on one side over the right shoulder. His nose is no commanding beak; it is straight and small, the nostrils wide and mobile. Below the left nostril is a wart, thought to be very agreeable in appearance. In whatever assemblage of men, he is recognisably the king. He radiates energy. His temper is naturally violent; and he is aware of it, so much so, that his orders are that no death-warrant is to be carried out till it is twice confirmed. His anger is terrible, but easily appeased. He has an insatiable curiosity, and loves new things. His mind is as incessantly employed as his body.

And yet strange to say, Akbar, the greatest and, except possibly Philip of Spain, the wealthiest potentate of his time in the world, a man versed in history and poetry and delighting in philosophical discussion, is illiterate. He can neither read nor write. It is true that there exists on the flyleaf of a precious manuscript copy of the 'Life of Timur,' Akbar's ancestor, a single signature of his, laboriously written in a childish hand and reverently attested by his son Jahangir. But this signature, preserved as a unique marvel, only confirms the universal testimony to his inability. Yet, if unable to read, he is all the more

able to remember. He has books read aloud to him, and knows them better than if he had read them himself. His memory indeed is as prodigious as his energy.

A traveller from Europe in the latter part of the sixteenth century who should arrive at last in the Mogul's dominion would find no difficulty in seeing the Emperor at close quarters and enjoying his conversation. Foreigners were welcome; and indeed among those who habitually thronged the courtyards at Fatehpur-Sikri, that strange splendid city built at Akbar's whim and afterwards so suddenly abandoned, were men of various Asiatic races, predominantly Persians, Turks, and Hindus, and of many diverse creeds. 'The Great Mogul' was a sort of fairy-tale in the West; yet here were all the marks of a civilisation closely parallel with that of Europe, though so different on the surface. The external magnificence might have some touches of the barbaric; but then what barbarities mingled with the refinements of European courts! What dirt was disguised by the perfumes! Refinements were here of every sort: a love of letters and the arts. Poetry was held in high honour. Painters and architects abounded, under the direct patronage of the Emperor, who himself had learnt to draw and was a skilled musician, besides being a worker in half a dozen handicrafts. If theological disputation and religious animosities were a sign of high civilisation, these rivalled in fierceness those of Western countries; but while in Europe the disputants burnt or massacred one another in their zeal, and devastated whole countries in the name of religion,



here in India a restraining power prevented arguments from ending in the use of swords: here was a monarch who actually believed in toleration.

Any day, then, our traveller might have seen Akbar holding a reception; for he holds audience twice a day. The blaze of the Indian sun makes strong shadows from the verandah-pillars of the red sandstone palace, where Akbar receives one courtier or envoy after another. Peacocks sun themselves on the roof of the verandah; in the courtyard elephants are slowly led; a groom holds a cheetah in leash; an animated crowd of virile-looking men in dresses of fine silk and of various colours stand about. Akbar himself is dressed in a surcoat reaching to the knees and wears a closely-rolled turban hiding his hair; a rope of great pearls hangs from his neck. His manner has subtle changes. With the great he is great and does not unbend; to the humble he is kindly and sympathetic. It is noticeable how he makes more of the small presents of the poor (and he is very fond of presents) than of the costly gifts of the nobles, at which he will hardly glance. As a dispenser of justice he is famous; every one wronged (an observer has said) 'believes the Emperor is on his side.'

Four times in twenty-four hours Akbar prays to God: at sunrise, at noon, at sunset, and midnight. But any one who tried to keep up with his daily activities would need to be of iron make. Three hours suffice for Akbar's sleep. He eats but one meal a day, and that at no fixed time. He eats but little meat, less and less as he grows older: 'Why should we make ourselves a sepulchre for beasts?'

is one of his sayings. Rice and sweetmeats are the chief of his diet, and fruit, of which he is extremely fond. His day is a long one, and he fills it full. Between state councils and conferences with ministers or generals he inspects his elephants—of which he has five thousand in his stables—his horses, and other animals. He knows them by name. He notes their condition; if any show signs of growing thin and poorly, the keeper responsible finds his salary docked. Presently he will repair to an upper terrace where are the dove-cotes, built of blue and white brick, and with infinite pleasure he watches the evolutions of the tumbler-pigeons, deploying and returning, massing or separating, to the sound of a whistle. At another time he will be watching (like Marcus Aurelius) gladiatorial combats, or fights between elephants, or between elephants and lions. But though entering with such zest on his amusements, his mind is occupied also with other things: for messengers arrive continually from every part of the empire and rapid decisions have to be taken. Another time he is inspecting his school of painters, passing quickly among them and appraising their work. Or he will go down to the workshop, and turn carpenter or stonemason. He is especially fond of the foundry, and loves to found a cannon with his own hands.

When at evening lights are lit in the great hall, the Emperor takes his seat among his courtiers and has books read to him; or music is played, and Akbar himself joins in or he laughs at jests and stories. If there are foreigners present, he plies them with unceasing questions. He will sit far into the night

absorbed in discussions on religion: this is one of his dear delights. Yet this crowded, pulsing life does not wholly absorb him. Frequently he will disappear and sit apart in solitary meditation for hours at a time.

Such is Akbar's way of life at court. But these are only intervals between campaigns, which he always opens with a hunt on an enormous scale. Even on his campaigns he will, when there is no need for swift marching, pursue much the same occupations.

Of how many notable people in the world's history does our knowledge seem so complete?

Yet do we really, after all, know Akbar the man? What is the truth about his character? Quite contrary opinions have been expressed; and many of his actions can be interpreted in opposite ways.

Since the witness of Akbar's own historian, Abul Fazl, may be thought too prejudiced, let us turn to the Jesuits; they certainly had no motive for giving Akbar more than his due.

The truth about Akbar is not simple; his was by nature a complex character; in the intricacy of circumstances its complexity was bound to be increased. But let us try to approach it a little closer. The Jesuits came into contact with Akbar through discussions on religion. He had sent for them of his own accord, and they had hoped to convert him. They had every excuse for being exasperated with him, since he always in the end eluded their grasp, and nothing is more natural than Bartoli's angry outburst: "He never gave anybody the chance to

understand rightly his inmost sentiments." But when the question of religion is in abeyance, when the ground is neutral and there is no occasion for prejudice, we find a different tone.

*The king is by nature simple and straightforward.* These are the words of the Jesuit Monserrate, who accompanied Akbar on his Kabul expedition; and the occasion was the discovery by Akbar of treachery on the part of a man he had loaded with honours. 'Naturally humane, gentle and kind' is the phrase of Peruschi. 'Just to all men,' says another.

'By nature simple and straightforward: ' that, I think, is the truth; but we must stress a little that *by nature*. For, that a man should live the life led by Akbar, accomplish what he accomplished, and succeed in being always simple and straightforward, would be something of a miracle. In continual danger from his boyhood, he was surrounded by treachery, jealousy, and intrigue. He seldom knew whom he could trust. He had continually to wear a mask and to hide his thoughts in self-defence. The astonishing thing is that he did not end in protecting himself by an armour of permanent suspicion and guile, but that he would often trust men after they had proved unfaithful, still seeking to find 'if any portion of good remains in that evil nature,' as he said on one occasion. Fundamentally, he was honest and sincere. See how, when he meets a transparently honest nature, like Ridolfo Aquaviva, the mutual liking is instinctive.

'Naturally humane and kind.' Every one was struck by this aspect of Akbar's character, remarkable

indeed in one who had the absolute powers of an autocrat and who suffered so much from faithless servants.

Akbar's clemency, like Caesar's, was famous. Was he also, like Caesar, an epileptic? The native historians say nothing of it, nor does Monserrate, the Jesuit, who knew him intimately. The statement that he had the falling sickness is casually made in Du Jarrie's compilation from Jesuit notes and records, on what authority is unknown, and only there. The Jesuits supposed that he took to sports and amusements to distract his melancholy; which seems a superfluous conjecture. But the fact of the disease is not improbable. Akbar's second son Murad developed epilepsy.

'Just to all men.' It was Akbar's justice that chiefly reconciled the peoples he conquered to his rule. It was a basic quality in his nature. And it proceeded not so much, I think, from a sense of law, as from a sort of uncorrupted innocence of mind which persisted through all his experience of the world. Innocence may seem a strange word to use. I mean an innate candour powerful enough to be able to see things unclouded by the prejudices which we absorb from our surroundings or inherit from the past or imbibe from early teaching, and to which most natures unconsciously surrender. There were impositions which for centuries the Muhammadan conquerors had laid upon the Hindus. They had been accepted as things of course. They were the conquerors' due. To Akbar with his direct vision they seemed unjust; and though hardly more than a boy, against all

tradition, against the opposition of every one, he abolished them. It was again in the teeth of the most dangerous opposition that he made overtures to the Jesuits and seemed on the verge of adopting Christianity. What held him back in the end? It was the thought to which, with a child's obstinacy, he was always returning: there are good men professing every creed, and each proclaiming his creed to be true, all the others false; how can one be sure that he is right? He was the antithesis of a bigot. On the other hand, he was anything but indifferent. For in this man of action, this lover of life, whose body exulted in its strength and who strode through the world so confidently, there was hidden a profound capacity for sadness, self-doubting thoughts, dissatisfactions, a craving for illumination. From boyhood he had, from time to time, mystical experiences, in which he seemed to be given direct communion with the Divine Presence; and on his death-bed, when he was past recognising men and past all speech, while eager theologians hung over him in the hope to direct the departing soul, he was heard murmuring to himself and endeavouring to articulate the name of God.

*Laurence Binyon*

## THE DEAR DEPARTED

### *Characters*

MRS. AMELIA SLATER	}	SISTERS
MRS. ELIZABETH JORDAN		

HENRY SLATER

THEIR HUSBANDS

BEN JORDAN

VICTORIA SLATER: A GIRL OF TEN

ABEL MERRYWEATHER

The action takes place in a provincial town in England  
on a Saturday afternoon

NOTE.—The terms " Left " and " Right " in the stage directions refer to the spectator's left and right, not the actor's.

*The scene is the sitting-room of a small house in a lower middle-class district of a provincial town. On the spectator's left is the window, with the blinds down. A sofa is in front of it. On his right is a fireplace with an armchair by it. In the middle of the wall facing the spectator is the door into the passage. To the left of the door a cheap, shabby chest of drawers, to the right a sideboard. In the middle of the room is the table, with chairs round it. Ornaments and a cheap American clock are on the mantelpiece, in the hearth a kettle. By the sideboard a pair of gaudy new carpet slippers. The table is partly laid for tea, and the necessaries for the meal are on the sideboard, as also are copies of an evening paper and of " Tit-Bits " and " Pearson's Weekly." Turning to the left through the door takes you to the front door; to the right, upstairs. In the passage a hatstand is visible.*

*When the Curtain rises Mrs. Slater is seen laying the table. She is a vigorous, red-faced woman, prepared to do any amount of straight talking to get her own way. She is in black, but not in complete mourning. She listens a moment and then goes to the window, opens it and calls into the street.*



**MRS. SLATER**, *sharply*: Victoria, Victoria! D'ye hear?  
Come in, will you?

*Mrs. Slater closes window and puts the blind straight and then returns to her work at the table. Victoria, a precocious girl of ten, dressed in colours, enters*

I'm amazed at you, Victoria; I really am. How you can be gallivanting about in the street with your grandfather lying dead and cold upstairs, I don't know. Be off now, and change your dress before your Aunt Elizabeth and your Uncle Ben come. It would never do for them to find you in colours.

**VICTORIA**: What are they coming for? They haven't been here for ages.

**MRS. SLATER**: They're coming to talk over poor grandpa's affairs. Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead.

*A noise is heard*

Good gracious, that's never them. *Mrs. Slater hurries to the door and opens it.* No, thank goodness! it's only your father.

*Henry Slater, a stooping, heavy man with a drooping moustache, enters. He is wearing a black tail coat, grey trousers, a black tie and a bowler hat. He carries a little paper parcel*

**HENRY**: Not come yet, eh?

**MRS. SLATER:** You can see they haven't, can't you. Now, Victoria, be off upstairs and that quick. Put your white frock on with a black sash.

*Victoria goes out*

*To Henry.* I'm not satisfied, but it's the best we can do till our new black's ready, and Ben and Elizabeth will never have thought about mourning yet, so we'll outshine them there.

*Henry sits in the armchair by the fire*

Get your boots off, Henry; Elizabeth's that prying she notices the least speck of dirt.

**HENRY:** I'm wondering if they'll come at all. When you and Elizabeth quarrelled she said she'd never set foot in your house again.

**MRS. SLATER:** She'll come fast enough after her share of what grandfather's left. You know how hard she can be when she likes. Where she gets it from I can't tell.

*Mrs. Slater unwraps the parcel Henry has brought. It contains sliced tongue, which she puts on a dish on the table*

**HENRY:** I suppose it's in the family.

**MRS. SLATER:** What do you mean by that, Henry Slater?

**HENRY:** I was referring to your father, not to you. Where are my slippers?

**MRS. SLATER:** In the kitchen; but you want a new pair, those old ones are nearly worn out. *Nearly breaking down.* You don't seem to realize what

it's costing me to bear up like I am doing. My heart's fit to break when I see the little trifles that belonged to grandfather lying around, and think he'll never use them again. *Briskly.* Here! you'd better wear these slippers of grandfather's now. It's lucky he'd just got a new pair.

HENRY: They'll be very small for me, my dear.

MRS. SLATER: They'll stretch, won't they? I'm not going to have them wasted. *She has finished laying the table.* Henry, I've been thinking about that bureau of grandfather's that's in his bedroom. You know I always wanted to have it after he died.

HENRY: You must arrange with Elizabeth when you're dividing things up.

MRS. SLATER: She'll see I'm after it, and she'll drive a hard bargain over it. Eh, what it is to have a low, 'money-grubbing spirit!

HENRY: Perhaps she's got her eye on the bureau as well.

MRS. SLATER: She's never been here since grandfather bought it. If it was only down here instead of in his room, she'd never guess it wasn't our own.

HENRY, *startled*: Amelia! *He rises.*

MRS. SLATER: Henry, why shouldn't we bring that bureau down here now. We could do it before they come.

HENRY, *stupefied*: I wouldn't care to.

MRS. SLATER: Don't look so daft. Why not?

HENRY: It doesn't seem delicate, somehow.

MRS. SLATER: We could put that shabby old chest of drawers upstairs where the bureau is now. Elizabeth could have that and welcome. I've always wanted to get rid of it. *She points to the drawers.*

HENRY: Suppose they come when we're doing it.

MRS. SLATER: I'll fasten the front door. Get your coat off, Henry; we'll change it.

*Mrs. Slater goes out to fasten the front door. Henry takes his coat off. Mrs. Slater reappears*

I'll run up and move the chairs out of the way.

*Victoria appears, dressed according to her mother's instructions*

VICTORIA: Will you fasten my frock up the back, mother?

MRS. SLATER: I'm busy; get your father to do it.

*Mrs. Slater hurries upstairs, and Henry fastens the frock*

VICTORIA: What have you got your coat off for, father?

HENRY: Mother and me is going to bring grandfather's bureau down here.

VICTORIA, *after a moment's thought*: Are we pinching it before Aunt Elizabeth comes?

HENRY, *shocked*: No, my child. Grandpa gave it your mother before he died.

VICTORIA: This morning?

HENRY: Yes.

VICTORIA: Ah! He was drunk this morning.

HENRY: Hush; you mustn't ever say he was drunk,  
now.

*Henry has fastened the frock, and Mrs. Slater appears  
carrying a handsome clock under her' arm*

MRS. SLATER: I thought I'd fetch this down as well.  
*She puts it on the mantelpiece.* Our clock's worth  
nothing and this always appealed to me.

VICTORIA: That's grandpa's clock.

MRS. SLATER: Chut! Be quiet! It's ours now. Come,  
Henry, lift your end. Victoria, don't breathe a  
word to your aunt about the clock and the bureau.

*They carry the chest of drawers through the doorway*

VICTORIA, *to herself*: I thought we'd pinched them.  
*After a short pause there is a sharp knock at the  
front door*

MRS. SLATER, *from upstairs*: Victoria, if that's your  
aunt and uncle you're not to open the door.

*Victoria peeps through the window*

VICTORIA: Mother, it's them!

MRS. SLATER: You're not to open the door till I come  
down.

*Knocking repeated*

Let them knock away.

*There is a heavy bumping noise*

Mind the wall, Henry.

*Henry and Mrs. Slater, very hot and flushed, stagger in with a pretty old-fashioned bureau containing a locked desk. They put it where the chest of drawers was, and straighten the ornaments, etc. The knocking is repeated.*

That was a near thing. Open the door, Victoria.

Now, Henry, get your coat on. *She helps him.*

HENRY: Did we knock much plaster off the wall?

MRS. SLATER: Never mind the plaster. Do I look all right? *Straightening her hair at the glass.* Just watch Elizabeth's face when she sees we're all in half-mourning. *Throwing him "Tit-Bits."* Take this and sit down. Try and look as if we'd been waiting for them.

*Henry sits in the armchair and Mrs. Slater left of table. They read ostentatiously. Victoria ushers in Ben and Mrs. Jordan. The latter is a stout, complacent woman with an impassive face and an irritating air of being always right. She is wearing a complete and deadly outfit of new mourning crowned by a great black hat with plumes. Ben is also in complete new mourning, with black gloves and a band round his hat. He is rather a jolly little man, accustomed to be humorous, but at present trying to adapt himself to the regrettable occasion. He has a bright, chirpy little voice. Mrs. Jordan sails into the room and solemnly goes straight to Mrs. Slater and kisses her. The men shake hands. Mrs. Jordan kisses Henry, Ben kisses Mrs. Slater. Not a word is spoken. Mrs. Slater furtively inspects the new mourning*

MRS. JORDAN: Well, Amelia, and so he's "gone" at last.

MRS. SLATER: Yes, he's gone. He was seventy-two a fortnight last Sunday. *She sniffs back a tear.*

*Mrs. Jordan sits on the left of the table. Mrs. Slater on the right. Henry in the armchair. Ben on the sofa with Victoria near him*

BEN, *chirpily*: Now, Amelia, you mustn't give way. We've all got to die some time or other. It might have been worse.

MRS. SLATER: I don't see how.

BEN: It might have been one of us.

HENRY: It's taken you a long time to get here, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN: Oh, I couldn't do it. I really couldn't do it.

MRS. SLATER, *suspiciously*: Couldn't do what?

MRS. JORDAN: I couldn't start without getting the mourning. *Glancing at her sister.*

MRS. SLATER: We've ordered ours, you may be sure. *Acidly.* I never could fancy buying ready-made things.

MRS. JORDAN: No? For myself it's such a relief to get into the black. And now perhaps you'll tell us all about it. What did the doctor say?

MRS. SLATER: Oh, he's not been near yet.

MRS. JORDAN: Not been near?

BEN, *in the same breath*: Didn't you send for him at once?

MRS. SLATER: Of course I did. Do you take me for a fool? I sent Henry at once for Dr. Pringle, but he was out.

BEN: You should have gone for another. Eh, Eliza?

MRS. JORDAN: Oh, yes. It's a fatal mistake.

MRS. SLATER: Pringle attended him when he was alive and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead. That's professional etiquette.

BEN: Well, you know your own business best, but—

MRS. JORDAN: Yes—it's a fatal mistake.

MRS. SLATER: Don't talk so silly, Elizabeth. What good could a doctor have done?

MRS. JORDAN: Look at the many cases of persons being restored to life hours after they were thought to be "gone."

HENRY: That's when they've been drowned. Your father wasn't drowned, Elizabeth.

BEN, *humorously*: There wasn't much fear of that. If there was one thing he couldn't bear it was water.

*He laughs, but no one else does*

MRS. JORDAN, *pained*: Ben! Ben is crushed at once.

MRS. SLATER, *piqued*: I'm sure he washed regular enough.

MRS. JORDAN: If he did take a drop too much at times, we'll not dwell on that, now.

MRS. SLATER: Father had been "merry" this morning. He went out soon after breakfast to pay his insurance.

BEN: My word, it's a good thing he did.



MRS. JORDAN: He always was thoughtful in that way. He was too honourable to have "gone" without paying his premium.

MRS. SLATER: Well, he must have gone round to the "Ring-o'-Bells" afterwards, for he came in as merry as a sandboy. I says, "We're only waiting Henry to start dinner." "Dinner," he says, "I don't want no dinner, I'm going to bed!"

BEN, *shaking his head*: Ah! Dear, dear.

HENRY: And when I came in I found him undressed sure enough and snug in bed. *He rises and stands on the hearthrug.*

MRS. JORDAN: *definitely*: Yes, he'd had a "warning." I'm sure of that. Did he know you?

HENRY: Yes. He spoke to me.

MRS. JORDAN: Did he say he'd had a "warning"?

HENRY: No. He said, "Henry, would you mind taking my boots off; I forgot before I got into bed."

MRS. JORDAN: He must have been wandering.

HENRY: No, he'd got 'em on all right.

MRS. SLATER: And when we'd finished dinner I thought I'd take up a bit of something on a tray. He was lying there for all the world as if he was asleep, so I put the tray down on the bureau—*correcting herself*—on the chest of drawers—and went to waken him. *A pause.* He was quite cold.

HENRY: Then I heard Amelia calling for me, and I ran upstairs.

MRS. SLATER: Of course we could do nothing.

MRS. JORDAN: He was "gone"?

HENRY: There wasn't any doubt.

MRS. JORDAN: I always knew he'd go sudden in the end.

*A pause, they wipe their eyes and sniff back tears*

MRS. SLATER, *rising briskly at length; in a business-like tone*: Well, will you go up and look at him now, or shall we have tea?

MRS. JORDAN: What do you say, Ben?

BEN: I'm not particular.

MRS. JORDAN, *surveying the table*: Well then, if the kettle's nearly ready we may as well have tea first.

*Mrs. Slater puts the kettle on the fire and gets tea ready*

HENRY: One thing we may as well decide now; the announcement in the papers.

MRS. JORDAN: I was thinking of that. What would you put?

MRS. SLATER: At the residence of his daughter, two hundred and thirty-five Upper Cornbank Street, etc.

HENRY: You wouldn't care for a bit of poetry?

MRS. JORDAN: I like "Never Forgotten." It's refined.

HENRY: Yes, but it's rather soon for that.

BEN: You couldn't very well have forgot him the day after.

MRS. SLATER: I always fancy "A loving husband, a kind father, and a faithful friend."

BEN, *doubtfully*: Do you think that's right?

HENRY: I don't think it matters whether it's right or not.

MRS. JORDAN: No, it's more for the look of the thing.

HENRY: I saw a verse in the "Evening News" yesterday. Proper poetry it was. It rhymed. *He gets the paper and reads.*

"Despised and forgotten by some you may be  
But the spot that contains you is sacred to we."

MRS. JORDAN: That'll never do. You don't say "Sacred to we."

HENRY: It's in the paper.

MRS. SLATER: You wouldn't say it if you were speaking properly; but it's different in poetry.

HENRY: Poetic licence, you know.

MRS. JORDAN: No, that'll never do. We want a verse that says how much we loved him and refers to all his good qualities and says what a heavy loss we've had.

MRS. SLATER: You want a whole poem. That'll cost a good lot.

MRS. JORDAN: Well, we'll think about it after tea, and then we'll look through his bits of things and make a list of them. There's all the furniture in his room.

HENRY: There's no jewellery or valuables of that sort.

MRS. JORDAN: Except his gold watch. He promised that to our Jimmy.

MRS. SLATER: Promised your Jimmy! I never heard of that.

MRS. JORDAN: Oh, but he did, Amelia, when he was living with us. He was very fond of Jimmy.

MRS. SLATER: Well. *Amazed*. I don't know!

BEN: Anyhow there's his insurance money. Have you got the receipt for the premium he paid this morning?

MRS. SLATER: I've not seen it.

*Victoria jumps up from the sofa and comes behind the table*

VICTORIA: Mother, I don't think grandpa went to pay his insurance this morning.

MRS. SLATER: He went out.

VICTORIA: Yes, but he didn't go into the town. He met old Mr. Tattersall down the street, and they went off past St. Phillip's Church.

MRS. SLATER: To the "Ring-o'-Bells," I'll be bound.

BEN: The "Ring-o'-Bells"?

MRS. SLATER: That public-house that John Shorrocks' widow keeps. He is always hanging about there. Oh, if he hasn't paid it——

BEN: Do you think he hasn't paid it? Was it overdue?

MRS. SLATER: I should think it was overdue.

MRS. JORDAN: Something tells me he's not paid it. I've a "warning," I know it; he's not paid it.

BEN: The drunken old beggar.

MRS. JORDAN: He's done it on purpose, just to annoy us.

MRS. SLATER: After all I've done for him, having to put up with him in the house these three years. It's nothing short of swindling.

MRS. JORDAN: I had to put up with him for five years.

MRS. SLATER: And you were trying to turn him over to us all the time.

HENRY: But we don't know for certain that he's not paid the premium. f

MRS. JORDAN: I do. It's come over me all at once that he hasn't.

MRS. SLATER: Victoria, run upstairs and fetch that bunch of keys that's on your grandpa's dressing-table.

VICTORIA, *timidly*: In grandpa's room?

MRS. SLATER: Yes.

VICTORIA: I—I don't like to.

MRS. SLATER: Don't talk so silly. There's no one can hurt you.

*Victoria goes out reluctantly*

We'll see if he's locked the receipt up in the bureau.

BEN: In where? In this thing? *He rises and examines it.*

MRS. JORDAN, *also rising*: Where did you pick that up, Amelia? It's new since last I was here.

*They examine it closely*

MRS. SLATER: Oh—Henry picked it up one day.

MRS. JORDAN: I like it. It's artistic. Did you buy it at an auction?

HENRY: Eh? Where did I buy it, Amelia?

MRS. SLATER: Yes, at an auction.

BEN, *disparagingly*: Oh, second-hand.

MRS. JORDAN: Don't show your ignorance, Ben. All artistic things are second-hand. Look at those old masters.

*Victoria returns, very scared. She closes the door after her*

VICTORIA: Mother! Mother!

MRS. SLATER: What is it, child?

VICTORIA: Grandpa's getting up.

BEN: What?

MRS. SLATER: What do you say?

VICTORIA: Grandpa's getting up.

MRS. JORDAN: The child's crazy.

MRS. SLATER: Don't talk so silly. Don't you know your grandpa's dead?

VICTORIA: No, no; he's getting up. I saw him.

*They are transfixed with amazement; Ben and Mrs. Jordan left of table; Victoria clings to Mrs. Slater, right of table; Henry near fireplace*

MRS. JORDAN: You'd better go up and see for yourself, Amelia.

MRS. SLATER: Here—come with me, Henry.

*Henry draws back terrified*

BEN, *suddenly*: Hist! Listen.

*They look at the door. A slight chuckling is heard outside. The door opens, revealing an old man clad in a faded but gay dressing-gown. He is in his stockinged feet. Although over seventy, he is vigor-*

*ous and well coloured; his bright, malicious eyes twinkle under his heavy, reddish-grey eyebrows. He is obviously either grandfather Abel Merryweather or else his ghost*

ABEL: What's the matter with little Vicky? *He sees Ben and Mrs. Jordan.* Hello! What brings you here? How's yourself, Ben?

*Abel thrusts his hand at Ben, who skips back smartly and retreats with Mrs. Jordan to a safe distance below the sofa*

MRS. SLATER, *approaching Abel gingerly*: Grandfather, is that you? *She pokes him with her hand to see if he is solid.*

ABEL: Of course it's me. Don't do that, 'Melia. What the devil do you mean by this tomfoolery?

MRS. SLATER, *to the others*: He's not dead.

BEN: Doesn't seem like it.

ABEL, *irritated by the whispering*: You've kept away long enough, Lizzie; and now you've come you don't seem over-pleased to see me.

MRS. JORDAN: You took us by surprise, father. Are you keeping quite well?

ABEL, *trying to catch the words*: Eh? What?

MRS. JORDAN: Are you quite well?

ABEL: Aye, I'm right enough but for a bit of a headache. I wouldn't mind betting that I'm not the first in this house to be carried to the cemetery. I always think Henry there looks none too healthy.

MRS. JORDAN: Well, I never!

*Abel crosses to the armchair and Henry gets out of his way to the front of the table*

ABEL: 'Melia, what the dickens did I do with my new slippers?

MRS. SLATER, *confused*: Artn't they by the hearth, grandfather?

ABEL: I don't see them. *Observing Henry trying to remove the slippers.* Why, you've got 'em on, Henry.

MRS. SLATER, *promptly*: I told him to put them on to stretch them, they were so new and hard. Now, Henry.

*Mrs. Slater snatches the slippers from Henry and gives them to Abel, who puts them on and sits in armchair*

MRS. JORDAN, *to Ben*: Well, I don't call that delicate, stepping into a dead man's shoes in such haste.

*Henry goes up to the window, and pulls up the blind. Victoria runs across to Abel and sits on the floor at his feet*

VICTORIA: Oh, grandpa, I'm so glad you're not dead.

MRS. SLATER, *in a vindictive whisper*: Hold your tongue, Victoria.

ABEL: Eh? What's that? Who's gone dead?

MRS. SLATER, *loudly*: Victoria says she's sorry about your head.

ABEL: Ah, thank you, Vicky, but I'm feeling better.



MRS. SLATER, *to Mrs. Jordan*: He's so fond of Victoria.

MRS. JORDAN, *to Mrs. Slater*: Yes; he's fond of our Jimmy, too.

MRS. SLATER: You'd better ask him if he promised your Jimmy his gold watch.

MRS. JORDAN, *disconcerted*: I couldn't just now. I don't feel equal to it.

ABEL: Why, Ben, you're in mourning! And Lizzie too. And 'Melia, and Henry and little Vicky! Who's gone dead? It's someone in the family. *He chuckles.*

MRS. SLATER: No one you know, father. A relation of Ben's.

ABEL: And what relation of Ben's?

MRS. SLATER: His brother.

BEN, *to Mrs. Slater*: Dang it, I never had one.

ABEL: Dear, dear. And what was his name, Ben?

BEN, *at a loss*: Er—er. *He crosses to front of table.*

MRS. SLATER, *R. of table—prompting*: Frederick.

MRS. JORDAN, *L. of table—prompting*: Albert.

BEN: Er—Fred—Alb—Isaac.

ABEL: Isaac? And where did your brother Isaac die?

BEN: In—er—in Australia.

ABEL: Dear, dear. He'd be older than you, eh?

BEN: Yes, five years.

ABEL: Aye, aye. Are you going to the funeral?

BEN: Oh, yes.

MRS. SLATER     }  
MRS. JORDAN    } No, no.

BEN: No, of course not. *He retires to the left.*

ABEL, *rising*: Well. I suppose you've only been waiting for me to begin tea. I'm feeling hungry.

MRS. SLATER, *taking up the kettle*: I'll make tea.

ABEL: Come along, now; sit you down and let's be jolly.

*Abel sits at the head of the table, facing spectator. Ben and Mrs. Jordan on the left. Victoria brings a chair and sits by Abel. Mrs. Slater and Henry sit on the right. Both the women are next to Abel*

MRS. SLATER: Henry, give grandpa some tongue.

ABEL: Thank you. I'll make a start. *He helps himself to bread and butter.*

*Henry serves the tongue and Mrs. Slater pours out tea. Only Abel eats with any heartiness*

BEN: Glad to see you've got an appetite, Mr. Merryweather, although you've not been so well.

ABEL: Nothing serious. I've been lying down for a bit.

MRS. SLATER: Been to sleep, grandfather?

ABEL: No, I've not been to sleep.

HENRY  
MRS. SLATER } Oh!

ABEL, *eating and drinking*: I can't exactly call everything to mind, but I remember I was a bit dazed. I couldn't move an inch, hand or foot.

BEN: And could you see and hear, Mr. Merryweather?

ABEL: Yes, but I don't remember seeing anything particular. Mustard, Ben.

*Ben passes the mustard*

MRS. SLATER: Of course not, grandfather. It was all your fancy. You must have been asleep.

ABEL, *snappishly*: I tell you I wasn't asleep, 'Melia. Damn it, I ought to know.

MRS. JORDAN: Didn't you see Henry or Amelia come into the room?

ABEL, *scratching his head*: Now let me think——

MRS. SLATER: I wouldn't press him, Elizabeth. Don't press him.

HENRY: No, I wouldn't worry him.

ABEL, *suddenly recollecting*: Ay, begad! 'Melia and Henry, what the devil did you mean by shifting my bureau out of my bedroom?

*Henry and Mrs. Slater are speechless*

D'you hear me? Henry! 'Melia!

MRS. JORDAN: What bureau was that, father?

ABEL: Why, my bureau, the one I bought——

MRS. JORDAN, *pointing to the bureau*: Was it that one, father?

ABEL: Ah, that's it. What's it doing here? Eh?

*A pause. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes six.  
Everyone looks at it*

Drat me if that isn't my clock, too. What the devil's been going on in this house?

*A slight pause*

BEN: Well, I'll be hanged.

MRS. JORDAN, *rising*: I'll tell you what's been going on in this house, father. Nothing short of robbery.

MRS. SLATER: Be quiet, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN: I'll not be quiet. Oh, I call it double-faced.

HENRY: Now, now, Elizabeth.

MRS. JORDAN: And you, too. Are you such a poor creature that you must do every dirty thing she tells you?

MRS. SLATER, *rising*: Remember where you are, Elizabeth.

HENRY, *rising*: Come, come. No quarrelling.

BEN, *rising*: My wife's every right to speak her own mind.

MRS. SLATER: Then she can speak it outside, not here.

ABEL, *rising—thumping the table*: Damn it all, will someone tell me what's been going on?

MRS. JORDAN: Yes, I will. I'll not see you robbed.

ABEL: Who's been robbing me?

MRS. JORDAN: Amelia and Henry. They've stolen your clock and bureau. *Working herself up*. They sneaked into your room like a thief in the night and stole them after you were dead.

HENRY  
MRS. SLATER } Hush! Quiet, Elizabeth!

MRS. JORDAN: I'll not be stopped. After you were dead, I say.

ABEL: After who was dead?

MRS. JORDAN: You.

ABEL: But I'm not dead.

MRS. JORDAN: No, but they thought you were.

*A pause. Abel gazes round at them*

ABEL: Oho! So that's why you're all in black to-day.  
You thought I was dead. *He chuckles.* That  
was a big mistake. *He sits and resumes his tea.*

MRS. SLATER, *sobbing*: Grandfather.

ABEL: It didn't take you long to start dividing my  
things between you.

MRS. JORDAN: No, father; you mustn't think that,  
Amelia was simply getting hold of them on her  
own account.

ABEL: You always were a keen one, Amelia. I sup-  
pose you thought the will wasn't fair.

HENRY: Did you make a will?

ABEL: Yes, it was locked up in the bureau.

MRS. JORDAN: And what was in it, father?

ABEL: That doesn't matter now. I'm thinking of  
destroying it and making another.

MRS. SLATER, *sobbing*: Grandfather, you'll not be  
hard on me.

ABEL: I'll trouble you for another cup of tea, 'Melia;  
two lumps and plenty of milk.

MRS. SLATER: With pleasure, grandfather. *She pours  
out the tea.*

ABEL: I don't want to be hard on anyone. I'll tell  
you what I'm going to do. Since your mother  
died, I've lived part of the time with you, 'Melia,  
and part with you, Lizzie. Well, I shall make a  
new will, leaving all my bits of things to whoever  
I'm living with when I die. How does that strike  
you?

HENRY: It's a bit of a lottery.

MRS. JORDAN: And who do you intend to live with from now?

ABEL, *drinking his tea*: I'm just coming to that.

MRS. JORDAN: You know, father, it's quite time you came to live with us again. We'd make you very comfortable.

MRS. SLATER: No, he's not been with us as long as he was with you.

MRS. JORDAN: I may be wrong, but I don't think father will fancy living on with you after what's happened to-day.

ABEL: So you'd like to have me again, Lizzie?

MRS. JORDAN: You know we're ready for you to make your home with us for as long as you please.

ABEL: What do you say to that, 'Melia?

MRS. SLATER: All I can say is that Elizabeth's changed her mind in the last two years. *Rising*. Grandfather, do you know what the quarrel between us was about?

MRS. JORDAN: Amelia, don't be a fool; sit down.

MRS. SLATER: No, if I'm not to have him, you shan't either. We quarrelled because Elizabeth said she wouldn't take you off our hands at any price. She said she'd had enough of you to last a lifetime, and we'd got to keep you.

ABEL: It seems to me that neither of you has any cause to feel proud about the way you've treated me.

MRS. SLATER: If I've done anything wrong, I'm sure I'm sorry for it.

MRS. JORDAN: And I can't say more than that, too.

ABEL: It's a bit late to say it, now. You neither of you cared to put up with me.

MRS. SLATER }  
MRS. JORDAN } No, no, grandfather.

ABEL: Aye, you both say that because of what I've told you about leaving my money. Well, since you don't want me I'll go to someone that does.

BEN: Come, Mr. Merryweather, you've got to live with one of your daughters.

ABEL: I'll tell you what I've got to do. On Monday next I've got to do three things. I've got to go to the lawyer's and alter my will; and I've got to go to the insurance office and pay my premium; and I've got to go to St. Phillip's Church and get married.

BEN }  
HENRY } What!

MRS. JORDAN: Get married!

MRS. SLATER: He's out of his senses.

*General consternation*

ABEL: I say I'm going to get married.

MRS. SLATER: Who to?

ABEL: To Mrs. John Shorrocks who keeps the "Ring-o'-Bells." We've had it fixed up a good while now, but I was keeping it for a pleasant surprise. *He rises.* I felt I was a bit of a burden to you, so I found someone who'd think it a pleasure to look after me. We shall be very

glad to see you at the ceremony. *He gets to the door.* Till Monday, then. Twelve o'clock at St. Philip's Church. *Opening the door.* It's a good thing you brought that bureau downstairs, 'Melia. It'll be handier to carry across to the "Ring-o'-Bells" on Monday.

•  
*He goes out*

*The Curtain falls*

*Stanley Houghton*



## THE DISCOVERY

### CHARACTERS

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

PEDRO GUTIERREZ, *an officer.*

PEPE, *a page-boy.*

JUAN PATINO,

DIEGO GARCIA,

FRANCISCO,

GULLERMO IRES,

} *other scamen.*

*Note.*—Christopher Columbus first saw the light of the New World on the night of October 11, 1492. He was often “at open defiance” with his crew. These two circumstances, at least, are historical. For the rest, this little play had better be regarded as a work of imagination—H.O.

### APPROXIMATE PRONUNCIATIONS

PEDRO GUTIERREZ—*Páy-dro Goo-tee-érreth.*

PEPE—*Páy-pay.*

JUAN PATINO—*Hoo-ahn Pah-tée-nyo.*

DIEGO GARCIA—*Dee-áy-go Gar-thée-ah.*

FRANCISCO—*Frahn-this-co.*

GUILLERMO IRES—*Gill-yáir-mo Ee-rays.*

SCENE.—On board the “*Santa Maria*.”

TIME.—October, 11, 1492.

*The ship is seen from an angle, which brings the poop somewhat to the left, the quarter-deck taking up the greater part of the stage. If it is visible, the midmast should bear a crucifix, in passing which everybody mechanically crosses himself. A large lantern, containing a lighted candle, is fixed at the extreme top of the poop. The night is still, and there is little movement in the sails.*

*Two seamen are visible, both well to the right. Juan is on his knees, adjusting rigging; Diego is helping. The actions of both of them are indeterminate, clearly designed to conceal their real purpose. They speak in loud whispers.*

*Diego. Within the next half an hour he will go to the poop-head as sure as God's alive. He can't keep away from it. His eyes are glued on the sky as if he expected his precious New World to burst out of it like a thunderbolt! [He laughs derisively.]*

*Juan. Poor wretch!*

*Diego. Now, then, Juan—quaking again!*

*Juan. That's a lie! Why should I quake? What is there to fear? [After a brief pause] But I am sorry for him.*

*Diego. Why waste your pity? Shall it be one madman, his head stocked with visions, or forty honest seamen pining for their homes?*

*Juan.* But he's a *gracious* madman . . .

*Diego* [*impatiently*]. Gracious when all goes to his pleasure, but as irritable as a teething child when crossed!

[*A blasphemous song of the seamen is heard: it is a scarcely distinguishable murmur.*]

*Juan* [*sharply*]. They ought to stop that. The captain is always furious when he hears it.

*Diego.* Shan't we even *sing* to keep up our spirits? 'Sh!

[*They attend with assumed assiduity to the rigging.*

*Pedro Gutierrez comes in; he is somewhat surprised when he sees the others.*]

*Pedro.* Who's that?

*Diego* [*rising*]. Diego Garcia and Juan Patiño, sir.

*Pedro* [*inclined to be communicative*]. It's dark. I would welcome the moon. . . .

*Diego.* Aye, aye, Don Pedro. Some of us would welcome the coast of Spain still more.

*Pedro* [*pumping*]. Impatient, Diego?

*Diego* [*surlily*]. There are limits to patience, sir.

*Pedro* [*humouring him*]. And you've reached them, eh?

*Diego.* We're like bats trying to fly by day. It's time he gave way. Why should one man have the lives of fifty in his hands?

*Pedro* [*with authority*]. I hope we are not entertaining mutinous thoughts, Diego.

*Diego*. Mutiny is an ugly word, sir.

*Pedro*. And an uglier deed.

[*Juan, finishing his job at the rigging, rises, and with a salute goes off. Columbus comes on. (He is a tall, well-built man of forty-six. Hair prematurely white, complexion fair, almost ruddy. A man of quick temper and irritability which he controls only with an effort. His face, in repose, is melancholy.) Seeing Don Pedro in conversation with Diego, he looks a trifle suspicious. He turns quickly to Diego.*]

*Columbus*. That candle on the foremast is guttering; see that it is put right.

*Diego* [*sullenly*]. Aye, aye, sir. [*He goes.*]

*Columbus* [*recalling him*]. And, Diego!

*Diego* [*coming back*]. Yes, sir.

*Columbus*. This is the quarter-deck.

*Diego*. Yes, sir.

*Columbus*. A good sailor knows his place.

*Diego* [*with repressed fury*]. Yes, sir.

[*Columbus points off; Diego, scarcely concealing a scowl, goes off.*]

*Columbus* [*to Pedro*]. A surly dog!

*Pedro*. And a dangerous one. He does more than his share to inspire discontent.

*Columbus*. I have remarked it.

[*Columbus is thoughtful for a moment and remains stationary. Presently he goes on to the poop and looks out to sea. Pedro follows him. Simultaneously, Pepe, the page-boy, emerges from the hatchway, against which he stands, out of sight of the others. When they begin to talk he listens eagerly.*]

*Columbus.* Easterly, ever easterly. God is in the wind, Don Pedro.

*Pedro* [*with a short laugh*]. The crew would say that it is the Devil, rather, captain. All day, and every day, the wind blows easterly, blowing them away from their homes and their country, their wives and children, their friends and sweethearts.

*Columbus* [*hastily*]. You too, Don Pedro? Do you, too, doubt?

*Pedro.* Have I said so, captain? Am I not here by your side, prepared?

*Columbus.* Forgive me, friend. You are one of the few with faith, and it is not easy to hold fast to faith when nothing seems to warrant faith. Listen to that.

[*The song of the seamen is heard again. Columbus and Pedro descend to the quarter-deck.*]

*Columbus.* They drink too much.

*Pedro.* They are simple men and must have their relaxation. [*The next words break from him almost involuntarily.*] We have not all your vision, captain.

*Columbus.* You are beginning to doubt, Don Pedro. Give me the contents of your mind. I am

an impatient man and prone to be unjust; but—[*whimsically*—I mean well, Don Pedro. I mean' well. Speak without fear.

*Pedro* [at first with diffidence, but rapidly gaining confidence]. To-day is the 11th of October—more than two months since we saw the shores of Spain receding. You held a glittering hope of discovery before us, and we had faith. Day followed day, and soon we found ourselves in uncharted seas, but still we had faith. . . . I, at least, had faith. [*With dignity*] I am a man of some little learning, not easily led to wonder at natural phenomena as the unlettered might be. But I confess that I knew some uneasiness when the needle of the compass, instead of pointing to the constant North, jumped as if the devil had laid hand on it, and pointed to the North-west. I am not a child, nor a simpleton, nor a superstitious seaman; but there is such a thing as being too clever, prying into mysteries which were not meant for our eyes. In all humility, captain, I ask if it is God's will that we should pursue this voyage in the face of every portent of ill-luck? /

*Columbus* [*impatiently*]. It is *my* will. Is that not enough?

*Pedro* [bowing his head]. I am answered.

*Columbus* [*hastily*]. Forgive me, Don Pedro. A curb for my tongue—oh, a curb for my unbridled tongue, my worst enemy! [*More quietly*] *My* will, friend, because God's will. Shall that suffice?

*Pedro* [*not appeased*]. I do not claim your confidence, sir.

*Columbus* [thundering again]. But I claim yours. [The sound of the seamen's song is again heard.] A blight upon their singing! Bid them stop. [*Pedro* goes off, with an air of discontent. When he is alone, *Columbus* looks out at sea. Muttering.] Mystery? Would God implant the desire to solve mysteries and not provide the solution? [Suddenly *Pepe* runs up the steps to the poop. *Columbus* is startled.] Who is that?

*Pepe*. Me, captain—*Pepe*!

*Columbus* [frowning on him]. Have you been there all the time?

*Pepe*. Please, sir, I am off duty.

*Columbus*. Then why aren't you down below?

*Pepe* [whimsically, knowing that he is privileged]. I prefer your company to theirs. [He points below.] Am I in the way here, sir?

*Columbus* [humouring him]. What a boy! And what do they say of the preference?

*Pepe*. I don't speak to them. I hate them.

*Columbus*. 'Sh, *Pepe*! And get you gone! [*Pepe* turns reluctantly.] Quick! [*The boy goes more quickly.*] Here! You heard what Don *Pedro* said?

*Pepe*. Yes, captain. And he is the best . . .

*Columbus*. But even he doubts . . .

*Pepe*. Everybody doubts . . . except me.

*Columbus* [bitterly]. Everybody . . .

*Pepe* [eagerly]. Except me, captain, except me.  
[He goes to him impetuously.]

*Columbus* [laying a hand on the boy's head]. You are young enough to have faith. Thank you, boy. [*The seamen's song is heard again.*]

*Pepe*. They are horrible when they drink too much. They say it makes them forget.

*Columbus*. Poor fellows!

*Pepe* [approaching nearer]. Captain, be careful! Sometimes they are desperate.

[*The song surges up like a growl.*]

*Columbus*. That is ugly. I bade Don Pedro stop them. So you think they might become dangerous? [*Don Pedro returns.*] Go, boy. [*Pepe moves away, but does not go out.*] Well, Don Pedro? Their singing changes to a roar. The deepening of their discontent is ominous. [*The noise grows louder.*]

*Pedro*. Captain, they ignore my order.

*Columbus* [furious]. I'll make an example of one of them. [*Suddenly.*] Hallo, there! What sneaking mischief-maker is that crawling about the deck? Show yourself! [*Francisco appears from the right.*]

*Columbus*. Ho, Francisco—you, is it?

*Francisco*. Yes, sir. And I'm no sneaking mischief-maker.

*Columbus*. Then why behave as one? Why are you here? Did I send for you? Is discipline obsolete in the Ocean Sea? Is Jack as good as his master nowadays?

*Francisco* [humbly]. Your words sting, sir!

*Columbus*. And are meant to. I am tired of the mumblin' and grumblin' of the crew. I have been patient too long



*Francisco.* I came to warn you, sir. The temper of the crew is dangerous.

*Columbus.* Danger is the breath of my life. I should doubt I lived if I lived outside danger.

*Francisco* [*the words springing from him spasmodically*]. Our power of endurance has gone. We refuse to go on. I warn you. I respect your person and do not wish to see violence used; but it is more than mortal can bear, this endless sailing into unknown seas.

*Columbus* [*to Pedro*]. Don Pedro, the ship is in your hands. I will talk to our friend as man to man. [*Pedro goes on to the poop. Columbus, his voice gentler, almost ingratiating, turns to Francisco, who shifts from foot to foot, nervous by reason of the unaccustomed propinquity.*] *Francisco*, let me plead with you. (There are men whom God has chosen for the working of His will. I am such a man. There is no more merit in me than in this ship: we are both instruments of God. Sometimes He chooses oddly: a stronger than I might have served His purpose better. But since God chose me, who shall withstand me? 'The four corners of the earth are to be linked up in the knowledge of their Saviour. I have lifted the veils which obscured the prophecies of Holy Writ, and I have learned that it was ordained that I, chosen among all men, should discover that great world beyond the ocean which I know exists as surely as I know that Heaven exists.)

*Francisco.* Must simple men suffer because of your knowledge?

*Columbus* [quickly]. Simple men shall do their duty.

*Francisco*. There are limits to duty. Men will give up many things for duty and for gain, but you ask too much. Country, family, friends, perhaps even life itself—all these things you ask us to give up for *your* glory. We are not chosen of God to open up new ways: we are simple, humble men, sick for our homes.

*Columbus*. My Heaven, Francisco, you try me...

*Francisco* [gaining courage]. Not more than you try us, sir. I come to you as a friend, sir. The men are at the end of their patience and spoiling for a fight. The stoutest rope breaks at last. [*The song swells up again. Spoken words mingle with the song, and the voice of Guillermo Ires is heard above the rest.*] Did you hear that, sir!

*Columbus*. I heard the sparling of angry beasts.

*Francisco*. You heard the just complaints of angry men, sir. [*Again Guillermo's voice pierces the din. Columbus stands rigid, endeavouring to catch the words.*] Did you hear that, sir?

*Pepe* [*who has been unobserved*]. They shan't! They shan't!

*Columbus*. Boy, come here. What were the words?

*Pepe* [almost weeping]. He said: "The Santa Maria will be the lighter for his carcass."

*Columbus* [bitterly]. He said that, did he?

[*He blinks—is moved more than he will show.*]

Francisco. I am sorry, sir. . . . I knew how high feeling had run.

Columbus [*authoritatively*]. Send Guillermo Ires to me!

Francisco [*not without diffidence*]. Sorry, sir, but . . .

Columbus. Discipline knows no buts.

Francisco [*angrily*]. Discipline is a thing of the past, sir. It's you or us.

Columbus [*to Don Pedro*]. Don Pedro, let Guillermo Ires be sent to me. He shall know what it is like in irons.

[*Pedro is half-way down the stairs to the quarter-deck when Guillermo Ires and other seamen rush in an angry mass towards Columbus, growling like infuriated animals.*]

Columbus [*in a thunderous voice*]. Stop! What is the meaning of this wild uproar? [*The men stand transfixed.*] The first man to move shall spend the rest of the night in irons!

[*There is a perceptible pause, during which nobody moves. Then, with a wild cry, Guillermo Ires breaks away from the others and advances towards Columbus.*]

Guillermo. And who's to put him in irons? We are thirty to one.

Columbus [*calmly*]. If nobody else is available for the office, I will perform it myself. Get below! Let me hear no more of this.

*Guillermo* [*in high excitement*]. We've stood too much. We've been duped day in, day out. We're men with the common feelings of men. We want our homes. I say the *Santa Maria* shall turn her helm towards Spain at once, or we are not men but sheep.

*Columbus* [*still calm*]. And who shall navigate her?

*Guillermo*. There's plenty here who can do that. The Devil's with *you*, we all know that, riding the easterly wind; but we are not men unused to the sea. Once clear of this Devil's track to nowhere, we'll blow our way back to home.

[*Signs of assent from the rest of the crew. Columbus raises his hand, appealing for silence. He is paler than his wont, but very calm.*]

*Columbus*. Don Guillermo, you are an excellent sailor, a man of abundant resourcefulness. Some day, if your tongue does not run away with your discretion, you will achieve prosperity in your calling. To-day you are an able-bodied seaman and no more: I am your captain. Your duty is to obey me as mine is to obey the Royal Sovereigns of Spain who sent me. Let that be clearly understood between us and we shall not fall out. Now return to your duties.

[*Again a perceptible pause. Columbus's authoritative manner holds them. Presently Diego breaks out.*]

*Diego*. Words for children! Froth and scum! We are men: reason with us!

*Columbus*. Silence!

[*The tone of authority calms the men, who remain, however, in a huddled crowd, murmuring discontentedly. Columbus turns and goes up the stairs to the poop, where he stands and looks down upon the men.*]

Diego [snarling]. I suppose you think you're on holy ground now? [*He bounds towards the stairs.*]

Voices [tumultuously]. Have him down! Pitch him overboard! Put him in irons! Devil's tool! Italian renegade!

[*They are about to stampede up the poop gangway, when Pepe runs to the foot of the stairs and stands with his arms spread out.*]

Pepe. Cowards! Cowards! You will have to kill me first!

Voices. Out of the way! Devil's whelp! Lick-spittle!

Columbus. What! Does that child stand between me and death? [*Silence follows the commencement of his speech.*] Pepe! Come here!

Pepe [going to him quickly]. My captain!

[*The men are somewhat sheepish.*]

Columbus. Pepe! This is a voyage of discovery. [*The men growl.*] I set out to discover a new world, a radiant land beyond unknown seas; to find new wealth and dominion for our Sovereign King and Queen, new souls for the sacrifice of our Saviour to redeem. So far I have discovered but one thing. [*He pauses and continues with slow deliberation.*] I have discovered that when a man is given a vision he must follow it alone. Loyalty passes like seaweed

on an outgoing tide. Friendship breaks as a mast hollowed by worms breaks. Discipline, duty, and honourable obedience are bubbles that burst at the first contact. There remains but oneself. That is my only discovery so far, Pepe.

*Pepe*. [*his eyes gleaming with excitement*]. Captain, I am loyal, I am still obedient, still your devoted servant. . . .

*Columbus* [*with some emotion*]. I am not ungrateful.

*Pedro* [*scraping his throat, with dignity*]. I hope my loyalty has never been in question, sir?

[*He salutes.*]

*Columbus* [*returning the salute*]. You have sometimes been silent, Don Pedro, when speech would have made your loyalty clear. But I thank you. . . .

[*Columbus turns and looks out at sea: for a moment his attention is fixed. He peers more earnestly into the darkness. There is a movement among the men. He turns.*]

*Juan*. We are simple men, sir. . . .

*Columbus* [*hastily*]. Shall simple men judge their betters?

*Guillermo* [*surlily*]. We may as well wait till to-morrow, at any rate.

*Columbus*. Dark deeds are better done in the dark.

[*Guillermo, scowling but sheepish, slinks off, followed by one or two of the seamen.*]

*Francisco*. Desperate men do not always act up to the best that is in them, sir.

*Columbus* [with quiet irony]. I thank you for reminding me, Francisco. Your best cannot be bettered. Good-night!

[*Francisco* half-turns to speak again, but thinks better of it and goes, shamefaced. Several others go, too, sheepish. A brief silence. *Columbus* does not move; he is struggling with overwrought emotion. When he speaks his voice is not steady.]

*Columbus*. Go, boy!

[*Pepe* seizes his hand, kisses it, and hastily descends to the quarter-deck and goes out.]

*Columbus* [turning to *Pedro*]. Two minutes ago, Don Pedro, I saw . . . I thought I saw . . . [*He peers into the darkness.*] It was . . . It is . . .

*Pedro* [in excitement]. What, sir?

*Columbus*. A light, faintly flickering, rising up and down. Look! [He points.]

*Pedro*. It is, sir! Glory be to God!

[At this moment there is a wild shout, off.]

*Voice* [off]. A light! A light! Land! Land!

[A sailor comes running on, delirious with joy and excitement.]

*Sailor*. Did you see it, sir? A light! Blessed Mother of God! A light!

*Columbus* [with quiet authority]. Give the order to heave to.

*Curtain*

*Hermon Ould*

## THE EARTH'S BELTS OF CLIMATE

Let us imagine ourselves taking an aeroplane journey from the North Pole to the equator, making notes of the kind of country we pass over. We should find it changed pretty regularly as we flew from north to south, and it would be interesting to try to understand the reasons for the change. The meridian of  $25^{\circ}$  east longitude would be a good one to fly along, and the summer would be the best time.

At first there is nothing to see but a flat expanse of ice with cracks in it. This is the frozen surface of the Arctic Ocean, cracked here and there by winds and currents. There would be no life at all for a long way, but after about 600 miles we should expect to see a few sea-birds and seals and perhaps a polar bear or so. Then we pass over the north-east corner of Spitsbergen. Most of this, we should see, is covered by an ice-cap, with glaciers flowing out from it into the sea. Round the edge of the ice-cap is a strip of barren plain with a few reindeer and foxes on it; no trees grow on it, only plants a few inches high. *Tundra* is the name given to such arctic treeless lands.

After flying across the Barents Sea, where at first there would be floating ice-floes, and afterwards per-



haps some fishing boats we should strike another strip of tundra, about 100 miles wide, in Lapland. Here Lapps are to be seen, with their herds of reindeer. After this, there is a huge belt of forest to be crossed—nothing but fir-trees, with lakes and occasional clearings, and some bigger clearings and towns on the coast. Finally, just north of the Gulf of Finland, the dense forest gives place to more open country, with a good deal of woodland, but also a good deal of cultivation.

After the Gulf of Finland there comes well over 1,000 miles of land till the next sea is reached. As we go south, there are fewer fir-trees and more trees like oaks, which shed their leaves in winter; there are more fields of wheat and other crops, more villages, more people. Then we fly over the Carpathian Mountains, with rock peaks standing out of forest-clad slopes, to the fertile plain of the Danube, with a great deal of wheat growing on it, and then over the Balkan Mountains to the Ægean Sea.

Where there are mountains the climate is generally cooler and wetter than it would otherwise be; and as a matter of fact, on this route the Carpathian Mountains make us miss an interesting kind of country. If we had made our flight ten degrees further east, where there are no big mountains, we should have passed over the same belts of tundra, of fir forest, of scattered woodland with cultivation, but then, a couple of hundred miles north of the Black Sea, should have come to a great stretch of land which was almost treeless, except just along the rivers. In the spring this would have been vivid

green, but by the summer most of it would look yellowy-brown because there is so little rain that the grass turns brown very quickly. Such lands are called *steppes*, and there is a great belt of steppe extending eastwards for over 2,500 miles from the west end of the Black Sea.

The steppes are too dry for trees to grow, and often too dry to cultivate. So for the most part, especially to the east, they are inhabited only by wandering tribes with their flocks and herds, and there are hardly any towns or villages with people living a settled life.

But we must go on with our journey along the meridian of 25°E. We cross the corner of the Mediterranean Sea known as the *Ægean*, flying over many little islands, and eventually reach the north coast of Africa, just on the boundary between Egypt and the Italian colony of Libya.

Already on the north side of the Mediterranean there would be many changes to notice. The country is drier; there are a great many vineyards and plantations of olive-trees. But after crossing the 200 miles of sea between Crete and Africa, a big change is apparent. There is a narrow strip of fertile land, and then the country becomes much more barren, until a couple of hundred miles inland we are flying over a real desert. This is the east end of the Sahara, the biggest desert in the world. For over 1,000 miles we fly over the desert. Here and there is a green spot in the yellow-brown landscape. This is a patch of vegetation which grows round one of the few water-holes in the desert; such a green moist spot in the desert

is called an *oasis*. But otherwise there is nothing to see but sand and bare rock, with perhaps a camel caravan now and then.

At last we emerge from the waste of sand, but even then there is another three hundred miles of dry, barren country to cross, with no trees but a few thorn-bushes, until the landscape becomes green again.

After the desert, at last we are in the tropical zone and begin to see negro people. But it is an upland country here, and at first is rather dry, with rolling grasslands and only scattered woods. However, there are forests along the river valleys, and gradually these forests grow bigger, and cover more and more of the landscape, until finally, about 400 miles north of the equator, the whole country is covered by trees, making a dense jungle, except where branches of the great Congo River shine through.

Eternal ice—tundra—fir forest—meadows and woodland, with cornfield and vineyards—steppe, desert and bush country—tropical forest—this is what we should see in our flight from pole to equator. These different kinds of country make belts, encircling the northern hemisphere. They are present in the southern hemisphere too, but there they are not so easy to follow, owing to the way the land is broken up south of the equator.

If we like we can simplify the picture still further, and group the different belts into four main zones of climate. There is the hot, wet, equatorial

zone close to the equator. This is bordered on either side by a hot dry zone with scrub country, steppes and deserts in it. Beyond these dry zones come a pair of moist zones again, but this time not very hot. They include most of the temperate parts of the earth; towards the poles we can take as their boundary the place where trees will no longer grow. Beyond this, in the polar zones, the climate is drier again, but very cold. The polar zones are really caps spreading all round the two poles. Even in the sea, zones can be made out. For instance, the kinds of corals which make coral-reefs are only found in a broad belt round the equator.

It is interesting, by the way, that we also find belts of climate on mountains. For instance, the great mountain-range called Ruwenzori, close to the equator in East Africa has its base clothed in dense equatorial forest. As you climb up the mountain the forest gets more like one in the temperate zone. At about 11,000 feet the forest ends, and you come out into grassland with scrub on it. Still higher up is moor country very like tundra, and finally vegetation ends and you come to the peaks of bare jagged rock sticking up out of snow and ice. These belts of climate on a mountain all depend on temperature: there is nothing to compare with the dry desert belt between the equatorial and the temperate zone.

This zoning of the world into belts of climate is, for us and the other animals and plants that live upon it, one of the most important facts about the earth.

## LIFE IN THE WORLD'S COLD BELTS

Let us go back to our imaginary aeroplane journey from the pole to the equator. Near the pole, the first main kind of country is a region of snow and ice. Very few plants can grow in this polar zone; for even where there is land, the soil, if it is not covered with snow all the year round, is uncovered only for a few months in the year. So most of the animals get their living from the sea. There are seals and walruses that live on fish and crabs and shellfish, and polar bears that live on the seals. Sea-birds are the most abundant creatures. Their power of flight allows them to come north to breed in the arctic summer; and so soon as the food supplies are stopped by the sea freezing over, they can fly south again. Some of the birds have taken to water life so thoroughly that they use their wings to swim with, and cannot fly. The best known of these are the penguins, but they are only found in the southern hemisphere. In the arctic, there used to be a kind of bird of the same sort, called the Great Auk; but it was mercilessly killed by sailors for food, and now there are no Great Auks left in the world—the whole species is extinct.

In the arctic region there are comparatively few cold-blooded animals. When we come to the human population of the arctic (there is none in the antarctic), we find that it, like the bird population, has to depend mainly on the sea. The best-known people of the arctic are the Eskimos, who live chiefly on seals. So difficult is human life in the arctic that

the total number of Eskimos is only about 15,000—no more than the population of a smallish country town.

Next we come to the belt of tundra beyond the region of perpetual snow. The tundra is a great treeless moor. The reason that trees will not grow on it, is the low average temperature of this belt of climate. The soil is always frozen solid to within a short distance of the surface, even in summer. So trees, which must send their roots deep into the soil if they are to nourish themselves and prevent themselves from being blown over, can never grow there.

As a matter of fact, there are willows to be found in the arctic tundra. But instead of growing into trees or big shrubs, they creep along the ground, and so do not have any need for deep roots. In most parts of the tundra, the snow lasts until May or even to midsummer, and wintry conditions set in again by September, so that instead of four seasons, there are only two—summer and winter. Accordingly the active life of the tundra plants is confined to a few months in the year. But when the summer does come, life can be very intense. In parts of the Siberian tundra, large numbers of birds fly up from the south every year to nest. They feed on last year's berries, which have been preserved through the winter by the snow, and on the insects, which the warmth brings out in swarms. Mosquitoes are often so numerous on the tundra in summer that people have to wear veils on their hats to keep them off.

Reindeer and foxes are the chief big animals of the tundra, with musk-oxen (a small kind of ox, no

bigger than a large sheep) in some parts. Life on the tundra is very hard for human beings, and most of them, like the Lapps, have to depend entirely on the reindeer which they have tamed. The Lapps are nomads, which means that they live a wandering life, moving their tents from place to place as their reindeer herds need fresh grazing. In this belt, again, the total number of human beings who now exist is very small.

Next we come to the huge belt of forest that circles the northern hemisphere, all across Canada, Northern Europe, and Northern Asia. The forest begins where the soil is no longer frozen all the year round. Most of the trees, especially in the north, are cone-bearing trees such as spruce firs, which have needle-like leaves and stay green in winter as well as summer. Their needle-like leaves have very few stomata, and so let very little water escape. They also have much less surface in proportion to their volume than has a flat leaf. These characteristics, you can see, would be useful in dry climates, and as a matter of fact there are many kinds of evergreen cone-bearing trees which grow best in such conditions. The 'Scotch fir' (which is really a pine) and other pines like the Austrian pine, are examples. But even when there is plenty of water in the soil the plant will not get much if the roots are not working actively; and this will happen when the soil is cold. So in cold countries, too, the trees have to take precautions against losing too much water through their leaves, and this is why you get trees with needle-leaves in the northern forests and high

up on mountains. In winter, when the roots are so cold that they can hardly work at all, there is even less water for the tree. But as the leaves are in any case giving out so little water-vapour, the tree need not trouble to shed them as it would have to if they were big and flat, and with a great many stomata. So almost all the trees with needle-leaves are ever-greens.

The firs in cold climates are almost all of 'Christmas-tree' shape—that is to say, they have their branches sloping downwards, so as to let the winter's snow slip off easily, for otherwise they would break under the weight. In warm dry countries, the needle-leaved trees do not have to grow in this way; for instance, the umbrella pine, which is common in Italy, has a very different shape, as you can guess from its name.

In these northern forests the trees cast such a deep shade that hardly any other plants will grow under their canopy. Because of this, animal life there is rather scanty. There are rabbits and mice, porcupines and deer to be found, and creatures like lynxes, wolves and foxes which prey upon them. Several kinds of animals are adapted to live mainly in the trees, like the squirrels and the flesh-eating weasel-like martens, and there are various kinds of forest birds like woodpeckers.

Man, too, has a hard time of it in these gloomy woods, and lives largely by trapping animals for their furs. To-day, when wood is in such demand for paper, big sections of the forests are being cut down, and the land thus cleared could be made available



for cultivation. Where there is water power for electricity and cleared land for crops, we may expect to find civilization creeping northwards into what was once part of this forest belt.

#### THE TEMPERATE LANDS AND THE DESERT BELT

Most of the big civilisations of to-day are found in the next belt, between the gloomy fir forest and the useless desert. This, we have seen, is a region of changeable weather and many storms. But it is neither too hot nor too cold, neither too wet nor too dry. In most parts of it trees grow well, and in prehistoric times a great deal of its surface was covered with forest. The Weald of Kent, for instance, gets its name from a German word meaning forest, because, at the time of the Saxon invasions, a great forest still spread over it.

Most of the trees in this region are trees like oaks and elms and beeches, which shed their leaves in winter. The reason for this is that they live in places which are not very dry, so it is best for them to have broad leaves with plenty of stomata. They then can run a good current of water through themselves, which will mean that they can take up more salts with their roots, and build up food-material more quickly. At least, they can do this in the summer. But in the winter, when the ground is cold, and the roots do not work so well, there would not be enough water coming in to make up for what was being lost by the leaves in the form of water-vapour, and the plants would wilt and die. So to

avoid this they shed their leaves before the weather grows too cold. It is only in the temperate belt that all the broad-leaved trees are bare in winter.

In the drier parts of the temperate belt, trees will not grow except along the course of the rivers, and then you get big grassy plains, like the steppes of Russia, the prairies of Canada and the United States, or, in the southern hemisphere, the pampas of South America and the grasslands of Australia.

The sort of animals which are fitted to live on plains are either small burrowing creatures which can be safe underground (for there are no trees or thickets to escape into), or else big swift-running creatures. Marmots and prairie-dogs and ground-squirrels are examples of the first sort. Of the second kind, you will find wild horses and wild asses in the steppes, and kangaroos in Australia; and, before they were all but killed out, huge herds of bison (usually but wrongly called buffalo) and of pronghorn antelope wandered over the American prairies. Among insects, grasshoppers and locusts are very common on grassy plains.

There is a great variety of birds through the whole of this temperate belt, and all the best-known song-birds live here. Many of the birds migrate south in winter when insect food is scarce; and for the same reason many of the smaller four-footed animals, like dormice and marmots and ground-squirrels, go into the winter sleep we call hibernation.

In this belt, both in the wooded region and in the plains, man has made many changes. He has cut down the forests and turned them into farmland.

He has planted wheat and maize and other crops both in the grasslands and in the clearings he has made in the woodlands. He has introduced his own domestic grass-eating animals. The pampas of South America, for instance, is now covered with cattle destined to be turned into beef, and the grasslands of Australia are grazed by millions of sheep.

In making these changes, man has almost or quite killed out many kinds of animals and birds. We have already spoken of the bison in America. In Britain, less than a thousand years ago, wolves were common, and organized hunts had to be undertaken when they became too dangerous. Deer, too, and wild boars and wild cats were abundant. This belt, in fact, is the region to which man, or at least the white man, is best suited; and it is the region which man has changed more than any other part of the world. Over all the fertile part of it he has got rid of most of the plants which grew there naturally and the wild animals that were adapted to the country, and has put in plants and animals which are useful to him.

As we get nearer and nearer to the belt of high air-pressure and low rainfall, the country gets drier, the trees give place to scattered scrub, agriculture grows less and less possible, until at length we reach the desert and find ourselves in a region as unfavourable to man as are the polar wastes.

In deserts you often find lakes of salt water, or thick crusts of solid salt. This is because there is not enough rain for the lakes to go on rising until they find an over-flow. The amount of water that

evaporates from them is as great as, or greater than, the amount which runs in, and so there is no river flowing out of them. There is a little salt in most soils, and water running in a stream takes up some of this in solution. So in a lake without an outlet, salt is all the time coming in, but none can get out, because when water evaporates, anything which it has dissolved in it is left behind. Accordingly, the lake gets saltier and saltier; and if the climate happens to get so dry that the lake dries right up, nothing is left of the lake but a white sheet of solid salt. The Dead Sea in Palestine is a famous example of these salty lakes, and the Great Salt Lake in Utah is another.

As regards life, the first characteristic of a desert is that plant life no longer manages to cover the ground. There is no canopy of trees or carpet of grass, but only scattered plants. The distance of one plant from its neighbours will vary with the conditions. In the worst deserts, like some parts of Arabia or the Sahara, there are no plants at all on the bare sand; but this is rare, and most deserts have a fair amount of scattered vegetation.

Of course these desert plants have to manage on much less water than plants in other situations, and must often go for long periods without any rain at all. Some of them arrange matters by living underground for most of the year, in the form of bulbs, and shooting up into leaf and flower as soon as it rains. In a couple of weeks they make all the food they need for the year, and exist in a dormant state all

the rest of the time. In deserts which have a regular rainy season, the whole place is carpeted with beautiful flowers a few days after the first shower. Then, after the scanty rains are over, they retire underground, leaving a sandy barren waste once more.

Bigger plants, however, cannot do this. So they store big reserves of water inside themselves on which they can live through long droughts. Sometimes the water is stored in the swollen base of the stem. Dr. McDougall brought a shrub of this sort out of the Arizona desert and put it on the shelf in a museum. It lived for eleven years on the water stored inside itself, putting out leaves every spring and shedding them again. This is the record. No other desert plant is known which has more than two or three years' reserve of water; compared with this it must be remembered that most plants that are not built to live in deserts will only survive a few days or hours without water.

Most large desert plants have the whole of their stem and their branches swollen up to act as places for water storage. The best-known examples of this are the spiny swollen-looking plants called cactuses (or cacti), but many others do the same thing. In the American deserts there is one barrel-shaped sort of cactus on which the thirsty traveller can rely for a drink. He cuts the top off, mashes up the pulpy inside, and sucks up the juice through a straw. The biggest cactuses manage to grow to twenty and thirty feet high in places where no other kind of tree can exist.

Of course, if desert plants are to store water properly, they must take steps against losing it by evaporation. One way of succeeding in this is to do without leaves, which means having no stomata. Cactuses, for instance make all their food with their stems, which are green: they either have no leaves at all, or very tiny ones. Another way is to cover as much of the surface as possible with something which prevents water from evaporating quickly. Some plants do this by varnishing themselves, so to speak, with a waxy waterproof covering; there is an Indian gourd, called Benincasa, which produces so much wax for this purpose that the natives scrape it off and make candles with it. Corky bark also serves the same purpose; the corks we use come from the bark of the cork oak, which grows in dry situations. Still other plants, like the common mullein, grow a thick coat of woolly hairs on their leaves; this entangles water vapour and reduces evaporation.

Finally, as plant life is so scarce in deserts, it must be specially well protected against being eaten by animals, and so must be very prickly. Cactuses again are the best examples; they are covered with bunches of hairs as sharp as the finest needles. Many other plants in deserts and dry countries are provided with thorns, sometimes of enormous size.

The animals of deserts have as hard a time as the plants. Most of them are sandy-coloured to escape their enemies, and many of them have feet splayed out in some way to prevent them sinking in the sand, just as men put on snow-shoes or skis to go over soft snow. A great many make burrows to

avoid the extreme heat of the sun. They are all adapted in some way or other to exist with very little water. Some, in this like certain kinds of desert plants, live in a torpid state in burrows through the dry season, and only come out in the rains. Others, such as certain kinds of antelopes, never drink at all, but manage to get the water they need out of their food. Others again, like the cactuses among the plants, store water inside themselves. There is a kind of frog in the Australian desert which has a huge bladder in which almost pure water is stored. The natives, when they can find nothing else to drink, sometimes use this to quench their thirst.

The camel is the most important of all desert animals to man. Camels have broad splay feet which enable them to walk easily over soft sand in which a horse or a man or a motor-car would sink, and they can hold a store of water in their stomachs and can carry loads for three or four days without drink.

In desert countries like Mongolia, Arabia and the Sahara, human beings are as dependent on camels as the Eskimos are on seals or the Lapps on reindeer. In the desert parts of Arabia, for instance, human beings can only live where there is grazing for their camels. When the grazing is exhausted in one place, they pack their tents and belongings on to the camels' backs, and move to another. No settled civilization is possible, but only a wandering nomad existence, and the desert, unless it is artificially irrigated by having water brought to it in canals, can only support a small population.

## LIFE NEAR THE EQUATOR

Between the deserts and the rich tropical jungles there is generally another region of rather dry open plains, often dotted with scattered trees like a park. The best known of such open park-like regions are in Africa. Here again, as on the temperate plain, the animals best suited to the conditions are grass-eaters which can run very fast. They generally live in herds, so that if one sees or smells danger the whole herd is warned.

In Africa, such animals can still be found in great numbers. The striped horses we know as zebras, buffaloes, rhinoceroses, the strange antelopes called gnus or wildebeest, many other kinds of antelopes, ostriches, and various kinds of wild pig roam the plains. The giraffe is another creature of this region, whose long neck especially fits him to feed on the leafy tops of thorn-trees which are out of reach of all the other animals. These plant-eating animals are preyed upon by flesh-eaters such as lions, leopards, hyenas, and the fierce wild dogs which hunt in packs.

Finally, we reach the real equatorial forest. This is a product of tropical heat and moisture. Here there is so much water, and the air is so full of moisture that the difficulty is not how to keep water in the plant, but how to make enough of it escape to keep up a good current from the roots. Accordingly the trees have broad leaves with many stomata, and some plants have special glands on their leaves or branches for getting rid of drops of liquid water out of their insides into the air. There is no winter, so



though the trees are broad-leaved, they need not all shed their leaves at one time, and the forest is green all the year round. Conditions are very favourable to plant growth, so not only do we find huge trees of many different kinds, but the trees themselves provide a home for many other kinds of plants. ' Creepers of various sorts hang from them, ferns and orchids grow on their branches. Many of these tree-growing plants have some of their roots hanging loose, and with them are able to suck moisture out of the air.

The biggest stretch of tropical forest in the world is in South America. Here we find many animals suited to life in trees. All the monkeys have prehensile tails (*prehensile* means able to catch hold of things), which they use as extra hands. High up in the trees the sloths travel slowly along, hanging upside-down from the branches. They are so well suited to life in the trees that they are completely unsuited to any other kind of life. On the ground, they can not stand upright, much less walk, for their feet are turned into hooks. They spend their whole life upside-down, though doubtless what is upside-down to us seems right way up to them. There are even tree-porcupines and tree-anteaters with prehensile tails to help them to climb. There is an abundance of tree-frogs which stick to the leaves by suckers on their feet. Many kinds of snakes crawl about the branches and hardly ever come down to the ground: the boa-constrictors, which have prehensile tails, are the biggest and best known. There are some large bats which live on the fruits of the trees, as well as many fruit-eating birds. Some of these creatures

live entirely on fruit. This is only possible in the tropics, where fruits of one kind or another are to be found all the year round, and not only in summer and autumn as with us. Climbing cats of various sorts, the biggest of which is the jaguar, prey on the other creatures.

The little insects known as termites (often called white ants, though they are really not ants at all), which are able to digest wood, are very abundant, owing to the mass of fallen trees on which they can feed. Some of the spiders are enormous, and even catch small birds in their webs. Some animals of the tropical forest have grown folds of skin which act as parachutes to help them in jumping from tree to tree, and so save them from going down to the ground, where they would not feel at home. The best known of these are the flying squirrels; but there are also flying lemurs, flying phalangiers, flying lizards, flying snakes, and flying frogs in tropical forests.

On the great plains, sight and smell are the senses on which most animals chiefly rely. But in the forests, where visibility is poor, and the trees break the force of the wind, hearing is the most important sense. So we find noisy creatures like howler monkeys and parrots; their loud cries help the members of a flock from losing touch. And most of the animals have big ears.

Life is not easy for man in the tropical forest. It is always dark on the ground: the real surface of the forest is over a hundred feet up, where the crowns of the trees make a leafy carpet, and there is sunshine and fresh air. Everything grows so fast

that even if a clearing is made it takes a great deal of labour to keep it from being quickly overgrown again. As there are thousands of kinds of insects, and as they can be active all the year round, any crops planted are very liable to be attacked by them.

So it comes about that in big tropical forest areas, as in South America and Central Africa, up till recently there were only scattered tribes of savages. It is only clearing on a big scale with the aid of modern machinery that can make such areas useful and productive for man.

Elsewhere in the tropics, where conditions are not so favourable to the growth of huge forests, a great deal of clearing has been done, and big populations can be supported. The island of Java, for instance, which is about as big as England and Wales, has more people per square mile. Rice and rubber, cocoa and palm-oil, sugar, spices and many fruits are products of the tropical regions.

A dark skin is an advantage in the tropics, because it keeps out certain rays of the sun which are harmful if the light is too intense; so we find that all people who naturally live in the tropics are black or brown. Many of them have very wide nostrils, like negroes and the Indians of tropical South America; this lets in air easily to the lungs, while the narrow noses of Eskimos, for instance, and most North American Indians will not let it pass so easily, so that the cold air of their countries gets warmed up as it passes in and cannot chill their lungs. The black races, like negroes, also have more sweat glands than white or yellow people. This helps to keep

them cool in hot climates. Thus among men, as among animals, there are some kinds which are better suited to one sort of climate, some to another sort.

So we see that the climate belts decide a great deal of the life of the world. They decide whether animal and plant life shall be abundant or scanty, and what it shall be like. Climate has a great effect on man too. There are places like the arctic and the deserts where life is too scarce or too poor for men to live comfortably, and other places like the equatorial forest where life is so luxuriant as to make things difficult for human beings. The two regions where man can be abundant and successful lie on either side of the desert belts. The cool stormy belts on the poleward side are the best suited to the civilisations of the white and yellow peoples, while brown and black men are better adapted to the hot countries nearer the equator, and live there in enormous numbers.

*E. N. da C. Andrade*  
*Julian Huxley*

## THE AVALANCHES

I lay long in my tent that evening writing, and it was nearly midnight before I blew out the candle, and composed myself to sleep. But sleep would not come. I was quite comfortable, my digestive organs were in good order, and acclimatisation had reduced my pulse-rate to nearly normal. The night was curiously warm, in fact, the warmest night we had since we arrived at the Base Camp. Now and again came the long-drawn-out thunder of avalanches.

Perhaps it was the atmosphere, or may be some trick of the imagination, but the sound of the avalanches seemed dull and muffled. It was as though Kangchenjunga was choking with suppressed wrath. My body was ready for sleep, but my mind was not. It was troubled and restless, groping in a catacomb of doubt and fear. I have known fear before on a mountain, but that was fear of a different nature, sharp and sudden in the face of an immediate danger, but I have never known what it was to lie awake before a climb, tortured by the devils of misgiving.

Some people may call this a premonition, but I do not think it can be so defined. Premonition of danger is, after all, an anticipation of danger, where,

theoretically, danger ought not to exist. That danger existed in this case cannot be denied. The mind had brooded over it consciously and subconsciously to the detriment of the nerves, and these had become temporarily unstrung. That is a more logical explanation than the acceptance of the premonition theory, which is more dependent upon a belief in psychical phenomena.

When, at last, I fell asleep, I was troubled with terrible dreams. These dreams were not dreams of personal danger, but of danger to the porters. They were always getting into an impossible position, and would turn to me appealingly for help. But I was unable to help. Afterwards, Wood Johnson told me he used frequently to dream this too. Possibly it was due to an innate sense of responsibility. Others on Himalayan expeditions have probably experienced the same sort of dreams. It was a bad night.

I crawled out of my tent the next morning, dull, heavy, and unrefreshed. I looked at the ice wall, and the weary track leading up through the snow to it, with loathing. Neither mentally nor physically did I feel fit to start.

The morning was ominously warm and a steamy heat beat down through sluggish mists. The sun was obscured, but for the first time on the mountain we were able to sit outside and keep reasonably warm without its rays on us.

It was decided that the scheme arranged the previous day should be adhered to. All except the cook and myself were to leave and try to establish Camp Three on the terrace.

Schneider with his usual boundless energy was the first to leave. He was accompanied by his servant, "Satan" Chettan, who was carrying a considerable load.

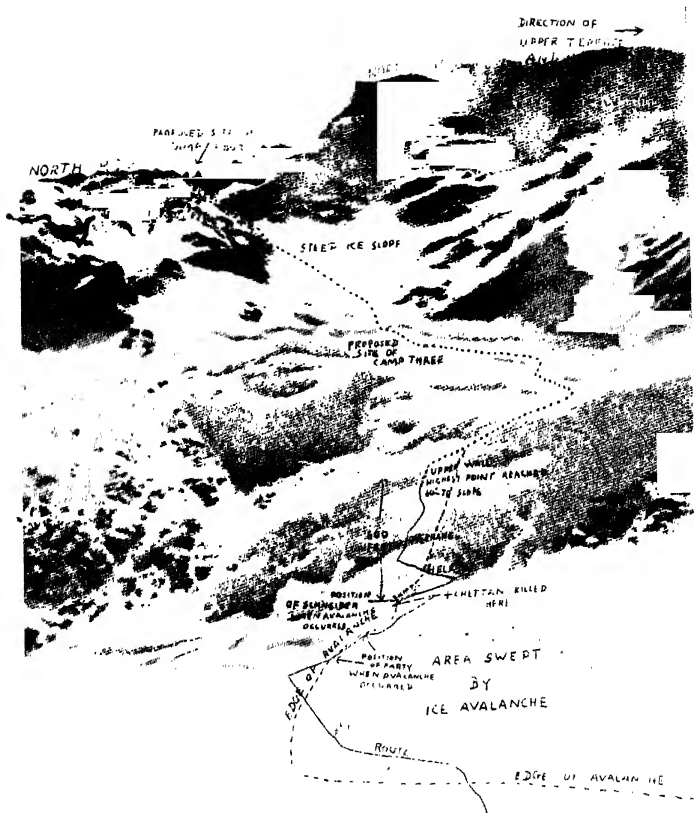
There was no porter in the expedition of a finer physique than "Satan," and I remember watching him swing on his load with effortless ease, and start off in the wake of his master, his legs propelling him uphill in shambling powerful strides, the gait of a born hillman and mountaineer.

Duvanel and three porters carrying cinematograph apparatus came next, as the former wished to obtain "shots" of the last party, which consisted of Hoerlin, Wieland, and eight porters carrying heavy loads. For a while I sat on a packing case, watching them as they slowly plodded up the slopes of soft snow, then I adjourned to my tent in order to write some letters.

Perhaps half an hour later I was startled by a tremendous roar. Two thoughts flashed through my mind. Firstly, that only an exceptionally large ice avalanche falling close at hand could make such a din, and secondly, with a sudden clutch of horror at my heart, that the noise came, not from the usual direction of Kangchenjunga's face, but from the ice wall!

I dashed outside. What I saw is indelibly engraved on my memory.

An enormous portion of the ice wall had collapsed. Huge masses of ice as high as cathedrals, were still toppling to destruction; billowing clouds of snow spray were rushing upwards and outwards in



CAMP TWO /

The Route up the Great Ice Wall





the van of a huge avalanche. On the slope below was the party, mere black dots, strung out in a straggling line. They were not moving. For an instant, during which I suppose my brain must have been stunned, the scene was stamped on my mind like a still photograph, or perhaps a more apt comparison would be a cinema film that has jammed for a fraction of a second. Then everything jerked on again. I remember feeling no surprise, it was almost like a fantastic solution to something that had been puzzling me.

Now the dots were moving, moving to the left; they were running, but how slowly, how uselessly before the reeling clouds of death that had already far outflanked them. The next moment the avalanche had swept down upon them; they were engulfed and blotted out like insects beneath a tidal wave.

In the tent I had been conscious of noise, but now I was no longer aware of it. The clouds of snow swept nearer. At first they had seemed to move slowly, but now they were shooting forwards with incredible velocity. Vicious tongues of ice licked out under them. Here and there solitary blocks broke free from the pall; behind them I caught a glimpse of a confused jumble of ice blocks, grinding together like the boulders in a stream bed caught up by the flood waters of a cloudburst.

The thought of personal danger had not occurred to me at first, but now, suddenly, came the realisation that the avalanche might sweep the camp away. I glanced round for the cook—he was standing out-

side the cooking tent—and yelled to him to run for it.

I had stood and watched the avalanche like one rooted to the spot in a nightmare. Running was nightmarish too. The feet sank deeply into the snow: at the height (20,000 feet) every step ~~was an effort~~. We floundered along for perhaps twenty yards, then heart and lungs gave out, and neither of us could continue. We looked round; the avalanche was stopping two hundred yards away. Though I had not been conscious of any noise after the initial roar, I was paradoxically conscious of it ceasing.

The avalanche stopped, only the clouds of snow, driven by the wind displaced by the falling masses, writhed far into the air. There was no sign of my companions. I turned to the cook: "They are all killed, but we must do what we can." We retraced our steps to the camp, seized ice-axes, and set out for the scene of the disaster. We tried to move quickly, but it was impossible at the altitude, it was better to go slowly and steadily, and how slow this was.

The clouds of snow began to settle, the veil thinned. It was a terrible moment. I expected to see no sign of the party. Then, to my immense relief, I saw dimly a figure away to the left, and then some more figures. We toiled upwards, skirting the edge of the avalanche; it was sharply defined, and the ice blocks were piled several feet high. Beyond it the snow was untouched, save where it had been scored by solitary blocks flung forwards from the main mass of ice.

Two hundred yards from the camp the track vanished beneath debris of the avalanche. We reached a little group of porters. They were standing stupidly, without moving or speaking, on the edge of the debris, all save one, who was probing energetically ~~with~~ <sup>an axe</sup> between the ice blocks. It was Nemu. I asked him what he was doing, whether there was a man buried there, and he replied, "Load, *sahib*, I look for load." In order to run and escape from the avalanche he had dropped his load, and this was seriously worrying him. Who were alive and who were dead did not concern him, he had dropped his load, the load entrusted to him by the *sahibs*.

I counted the party, two were missing. Hoerlin, Wieland, and Duvanel I could see above me. The missing ones were Schneider and Chettan. Two hundred feet higher I saw Wieland approaching something sticking out between the ice blocks. It was Chettan's hand. By the time I had climbed up he had been dug out. He was dead, having been carried down at least three hundred feet, and crushed in the torrent of ice blocks. His head was severely injured, but as a forlorn hope we administered artificial respiration for over an hour. In the middle of it Schneider reappeared. He had had a marvellous escape. He had actually been under the ice wall when it came down. He said: "I heard a crack; then down it came, huge masses of ice from hundreds of feet above. I thought I was dead, but I ran to the left, and the avalanche missed me by five metres." Chettan had been too far behind Schneider to save himself.

The remainder of the party had amazing luck. They had been on the track where it ran farthest to the left. Had they been ten minutes earlier or later, nothing could have saved them. Even so, they had had to run for their lives, and the track was swept almost from end to end. Duvanel told ~~me that~~ <sup>when</sup> he saw it coming, the thought of being able to escape never even occurred to him. But, like the others, he had run to the left, as it seemed better to be killed *doing something* than waiting for apparently certain death. So narrow had been the escape of the main body of the porters that some of them had actually been bruised by blocks of ice on the edge of the avalanche. The escape of the party can only be called a miracle of the mountains.

The portion of the wall that had fallen had been that outlined by the crack noted by Hoerlin and Schneider the previous day. In falling it swept the route on the ice wall diagonally, completely obliterating the lower part of the route that Wieland and I had made, destroying the snow bridge over the crevasse, and the ice hump under which we had sat. In fact, the topography of the route we had made at the expense of so much labour had been altered completely. The area of snow slopes covered by the *débris* must have been nearly a mile square, and the avalanche can scarcely have weighed less than <sup>a</sup> million tons.

We returned to camp, two of the porters taking turns at carrying Chettan. According to those who had been highest, another crack had opened up above the ice wall, and there was a strong possibility of

another avalanche, possibly greater even than the first, which might conceivably sweep away the camp. It was advisable to retire to Camp One with all speed. But before doing so we buried Chettan.

It was a simple, yet impressive ceremony. A hole was dug in the snow, and the body, dressed as it was in climbing clothes, laid within with folded arms. A handful of rice was roasted by the porters, and this was scattered over the body to the accompaniment of muttered prayers. We stood round with bared heads. Then someone gave an order, and snow was quickly shovelled into the grave. As this was done the mists dispersed, and the sun shone through for a few instants. Almost one could see the brave soul winging its way over the mountains. We drove in an ice-axe to mark the spot, and silently turned away. We had lost not a porter, but a valued friend. We left him buried amid one of the grandest mountain cirques in the world.

So died a genuine lover of the mountains, a real adventurer at heart, and one whom members of several Himalayan expeditions will mourn.

We descended to Camp One in a wet and soaking snow-storm, that later developed into a blizzard. Word was sent down to the Base Camp of the disaster, requesting that Professor Dyhrenfurth and Kurz should come up and discuss matters.

Wind was howling, and snow lashing the tents, as we ate supper and crept miserably into our sleeping bags.

## JOAN OF DOMREMY

If we run through all the great names of the world, and think of all the great things men have ever done, we shall find nothing to stir the human heart like the story of Joan of Domremy. She never lived beyond her teens, and all her greatness came in two short, vivid years, but in those two years she made herself the wonder of the world.

She startled France and England too; she struck dismay to the hearts of kings and lifted up the hearts of common people; she led armies into battle and gained great victories; she raised her country up from misery and gave it hope and confidence; and as a reward they took this matchless girl and put her in the fire, and sat round her while she burned.

It is the most unbelievable thing in history—the greatest story, the most thrilling adventure, the most pathetic tragedy, and the most incredible fact in the story of a thousand years of Europe, and every word of it is true. The life of this village maid is the only life in history of which every fact is proved on solemn oath. The archives of France are the witness to the truth of it, and we see in this wondrous story a miracle as if the Hand of God Himself were writing it for men to read.

God sent Joan into the world five hundred years ago, in the village of Domremy, on the banks of the Meuse. He took her back to Him in nineteen years. She came into our human history through a heavenly vision. She burst upon France like a miracle. She lives in its memory at this very hour like an inspiration and a dream.

She came into a France that was torn to pieces as France has been torn since, but the France of Joan was torn to pieces from within. (We think of our King Harry in those times, and we love to think of him with the glow of Shakespeare about him, with his fine speeches and his quenchless love of this land, this realm, this England,

That never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.)

But let us think of France in those days of Agincourt. France lay stricken at the feet of her English kings. Deep in the valley of humiliation lay that beautiful land. Her own king was mad, and his son was worse than mad. Her people were split into groups which hated each other more than they hated the foe, so that Paris hailed the English king and half of France allied itself with the invader. The king's son, heir to the throne, lived like a poltroon in a court which would have seen France bleed to death and care nothing so long as it could eat and drink and sleep.

(So the life of France swayed this way and that, as the life of an army sways.) Men-at-arms would burst on towns and villages, pillaging and sacking



them. Boys would watch all day from the church towers to see if the soldiers were coming. On the high-road to Germany lay the village of Domremy, and as Joan sat in her father's fields with his flocks and herds, or sat sewing with her mother by the window, making embroideries for the church, she would hear the tales of war. She would be eight years old when France was delivered to the English king; she was ten when Henry died and left an English child as supreme lord of France.

She loved France—France with her little churches and her great cathedrals, France with her heroes and saints; she loved the church bells and the oak wood near Domremy, and the magic well, and the great tree, and all the legends that seemed to be so true; and especially she loved the light that shone through the old church windows, with St. Michael in his shining armour and St. Margaret holding up her cross.

These things were real to Joan. She saw the vision and heard the voices as from heaven. She saw the white and shining saints and believed that they were calling, and one day in her garden these voices startled her. She was to save poor France, she was to go to the Dauphin, the king's son, and save him from his evil court and crown him king at Rheims. 'Daughter of God, go on; I will be with you,' the voices said, and Joan listened with trembling and wonder, for she was a simple village maid and knew nothing of that great world about the throne.

(Little did the peasants passing by that cottage garden realise the wonder that was working there.) All

this child's pity for France in its great agony, all her scorn of the enemy within its gates, mingled with the vision and the voices, and slowly she felt beyond it all a power that was not of this world. { Her life was illumined with a light from heaven; the solemn forces that lie about and above and beyond mankind were working in her: this country girl was all aglow. } (She moved on earth, yet she seemed like one in another world. Looking back through all these centuries, we feel that of all the people on the earth in those unhappy times this child was the most inspired.) She believed that God was speaking to her through His saints, and she did a rare thing in this world. (*Believing in God, she lived every hour as if she believed in Him.*)

{ No facts can explain Joan; she turns all history upside-down. } We have simply to believe what happened. This girl of sixteen set out to save France, to set a tottering king firm on the throne, to drive the English from their strongholds, and to give France a vision that should lift her high among the nations. She set out on this great adventure with no other weapon than her faith in God, and she did what she set out to do. (Five hundred years have passed, and France would lose all the priceless treasures in the Louvre, all the glories of art in her streets, all the money in her banks, and all the visible wealth she has, rather than lose the sweet and precious memory of Joan of Arc.)

Nothing could keep Joan back—she saw her path—and followed it. Her father would rather drown her in the Meuse, he said, than see her riding with

soldiers, and when she went to the captain of the town and said that she must go to the Dauphin to make him crowned king, the captain told her friend to box her ears and send her home.

12 But Joan came back undismayed. She consulted her uncle, the uncle consulted the captain, the captain consulted the priest, the priest consulted Joan, (and in the end the priest took this child with the spirit of God in her and ordered the spirit of the devil to come out of her. But God is not mocked.) (He chooses the simple things of this world to confound the wise, and in the end the captain of Vaucouleurs set Joan, with two guardians, on the road to the court at Chinon.) She guarded herself and her stainless name by putting on boy's clothes, and for eleven days these three travelled by dangerous ways. They slept by day and rode by night to avoid the bands of Englishmen, and forded rivers to miss the towns, but Joan was unafraid. 'God clears the way for me,' she said; 'I was born for this;' and at last they reached the court.

13 { It was the most contemptible court in Europe. To the end of time it will remain a mystery why a pitiful creature like Charles the Seventh should have been saved by Joan of Arc. } To most of us it seems an appalling thing that the inspiration of this heavenly maid should have gathered round a man so base as Charles. He was a fop and a fool. He wasted his life in an idle court, surrounded with snobs and dandies and tinselled ladies. He sat there, said Mark Twain, looking like a forked carrot. He wore tight clothes, shoes with a curled-up toe a foot long, a crimson velvet cape, and a sort of thimble cap with a feather sticking

out; (and it was this jest of France, looking like a box of paints in all his colours, and nursing a pet dog, who stood for the great idea of monarchy that held nations together in the ancient days of superstition.)

We must remember that all through the story of Joan. It was not for Charles the Base she did these things—it was for the King of France. The king was the centre and very heart of France, and Joan could see no hope for France until its heart was right. And so for the sake of the kingdom she tried to save the king. (He was not even sure, this poor creature, whether he was the lawful king or not, but Joan had no anxiety about that.) What she was sure about was that no king was true till he had consecrated his life to noble things. This Dauphin, if he would lead a new life in France, must be anointed by God and crowned king, and Joan would see to it.

And so, after two days' waiting, they led her in to the king. She was now seventeen and he was twenty-six. We can almost hear the tittering of the fops and dandies as the country maid walked in, but Joan ignored them all and knelt before the king. 'God give you good life, gentle Dauphin,' she said; and then the Dauphin played a trick on Joan. 'It is not I who am the king,' he said; 'there is the king.' But she was not to be deceived. 'Gentle prince, it is you and no other,' she said; 'I am Joan the Maid. I am sent to you by the King of Heaven to tell you that you shall be crowned at Rheims.' (And then she took the king aside and said something in secret to him which for ever after he regarded as a proof of her sincerity and inspiration. The king had a bitter secret,

and what Joan said to him showed that she understood.)

16 But the king, believing in Joan as he was bound to do, was afraid of the pompous clowns about his court. He could not stand their ridicule, and priests and soldiers and lords and ladies pooh-poohed the country girl. 'You say God will deliver France,' said a priest; 'if so, He has no need of men-at-arms.' 'Ah,' cried Joan, 'the men must fight; it is God who gives the victory.' Another monk pooh-poohed the voices, and asked what language they spoke. 'Much better than yours,' said Joan. They asked her for signs, and she said: 'I have not come to give signs; take me to Orleans.'

She was rather clever, they must have thought, and in the end, after much more questioning, it was announced that the king, 'bearing in mind the great goodness that was in the Maid,' would make use of her. The English were besieging Orleans, and their great fortified towers around the town blocked the king's road to Rheims. To drive them from these towers and raise the siege was the first thing commanded of Joan. They gave her a standard of white and gold, and on it was embroidered the portrait of Christ. (All through her triumphs, to the end of her days, she bore with her own hands this standard of the Light of the World.) The king would have given her a sword, but she asked that someone would go to a certain church and bring a sword that was buried behind the altar there, and they went and found the sword and brought it. It is said that

through all the battles which she led she never struck a blow.

13 She was put at the head of all the king's armies. She had power over all his generals and captains, and in April, 1429, she led them to Orleans. She must have looked a heavenly figure, clad in armour of dazzling white. The peasants pressed about her horse to touch the hem of her garment. All through her life the simple folk believed in her. { It was the generals and the priests who stood in her path and pestered her and thwarted her. She chose her own way for approaching Orleans, and the generals deceived her and took her by another, but she found them out and said: 'The counsel of God is more sure than yours.' }

Having reached the town, she sent a letter to the English, asking for the keys of all the good towns they had taken by violence in God's France, and begging them to leave the kingdom. If they would not believe her, she would make her way, 'and make so great a commotion as has not been in France for a thousand years.' The King of Heaven would send more strength to the Maid than the English could bring against her in all their assaults, but if they would act according to reason the English might still come in her company 'where the French will do the greatest work that has ever been done for Christianity.' The English mocked her as her own generals did; they sent their fierce defiance to the dairy-maid, and bade her go back to her cows.

But words were almost the only weapons the English fought Joan with in the siege of Orleans. She

led her troops towards them, and the battle swayed this way and that, but never did the English fire when Joan came on. They stood still and trembled before this dazzling figure in white armour. The arrows flew about her, and she cried with the pain as she drew one from her body with her own hand, but this figure in white, bearing the flag of white and gold, must have awed the English in the towers. She led her troops as one man to the wall. They flung themselves against it and the English fled, their forces broken.

It was like a bolt from the blue. Resting in a vine-yard after her wound, she heard talk of retreat. She knelt and said her prayers, planted her standard on the edge of the moat, and said: 'Let me know when the pennon touches the wall.' 'Joan,' they cried, 'it touches!' 'Then on, on! All is yours!' she said, and the town was relieved. The siege of seven months was raised in eight days. Joan of Domremy was Maid of Orleans.

The news flew from end to end of France. The king and all his fops were staggered. The priests could hardly believe. The generals were struck dumb. Joan urged the king on to Rheims, but they were all afraid. The king held long councils, but Joan rapped hard at the door, burst into the room, and cried: 'Noble Dauphin, why should you hold such long and tedious councils?' The court was impatient with this country girl. Not even Orleans could justify her in their eyes. (There was plenty of time, said the Dauphin, and then Joan said one of the saddest

things she ever said: '*I shall only last a year; use me as long as you can.*' )

It was true: she lasted only a year. They reached Troyes, where the king was afraid to attack the English garrisons. 'Noble Dauphin,' cried Joan, 'order your people to assault the city. Hold no more councils, for, by my God, in three days I will introduce you into the town.' 'Joan,' said the Chancellor, 'if you could do that in six days we might well wait.' 'You shall be master of the place,' said Joan to the king, 'not in six days, but to-morrow.' And on the morrow, at the sight of the Maid, the English left the town. After Troyes fell Chalons, where the gates were opened to them, and, Chalons being not far from Domremy, a group of neighbours came to see if all these tales were true about their little maid. They saw her riding with the king, they saw her in those great triumphant hours, and, pressing round her, they asked if she were not afraid. ('I fear nothing but treason,' said Joan; and on she went, fearing nothing else.) The campaign had lasted six weeks. There had been a victory almost every day, and Joan had never been defeated.

They reached Rheims, and the king and his court rode into the wondering town. Two bewildered rustics were watching from the windows of an inn. One was the uncle who had taken her to Vaucouleurs; the other was that father who had said he would rather see her drown than see her riding among troops. (It must have seemed like another world to him to see Joan standing by the king in Rheims Cathedral, to see her kneeling before him thanking



God, crying amid her tears: 'Now is the pleasure of God fulfilled.')

The king was crowned. Her vision had come true. She had done the work God had sent her to do, and she wanted to go home. France had a king again, and Joan was satisfied. To go from Rheims to Domremy was all she wanted now.

But she had made herself useful to the king and his fops, and perhaps even Charles was not altogether ungrateful. He offered her anything she asked for after he was crowned. She might have had horses and chariots, a palace full of servants, and raiment of fine gold. But what do you think she asked? She asked that Domremy might be free from taxes. It was all she asked, and they gave it freely. For 360 years you will find in the books of taxes, where the payments of all the towns and villages are set down, that opposite Domremy is no record of taxes paid, but simply the words 'Nothing, for the sake of the Maid.'

But, though they gave her what she asked, they broke her heart. Charles the Base, with his fools and his fops, was satisfied, and would do no more. He was satisfied with the name of king; to be every inch a king was not for a man who was every inch a clown.)

And so, perhaps, Joan might indeed have gone back to Domremy had it been left to Charles, but at last the generals, stirred by triumph after triumph, were anxious to go forward. (Joan, for the first time since she left home, doubted and faltered. She had done what the voices told her to do, and the voices

were no longer clear.) But she went on, and at last she was resolved to deliver Paris. Soissons surrendered before her, Château Thierry gave way, and then this base king, who would have given her anything at Rheims, made a secret truce with his enemies and betrayed his own army. When Joan appeared before Paris, the king was safe seven miles away, and in the night he had destroyed a bridge that his army needed for its assault. Now, in the crisis of the battle for Paris, he called back his generals and abandoned Joan.

29 (It was the meanest thing that even a king has ever done, but this creature on the throne of France was base enough for that. Joan found herself alone.) The generals obeyed the king and left her. (Never till that hour had Joan been beaten; it was the desertion of the king that changed her fortune.) The loyalty about her was breaking down; authority was overcoming her. She had never mutinied; she had never acted independently; it was her mission to save the king and the kingdom of France, and she saved the kingdom through the king.) (She could not mutiny now, and she went to the Cathedral of St. Denys and laid her armour on the altar there. Her work was done.)

30 Even then she would not desert the king who had deserted her. They gave her a place in the castle, where she stayed while the court went on with its idle life. (This court was not too low to produce a rival maid who was willing to say anything that was put in her mouth; but Joan was too noble to be troubled by things like that.) It was not natural,

however, that her stainless purity could long endure the foulness of the court of Charles, and one day Joan left the castle suddenly. She said no farewells. There was nobody in all the king's court who was fit to tie her shoelaces or to tread the ground she walked on, and, as far as we know, she never saw the king again.)

But once more these two come together in this story. Charles the Base was in danger at Compiègne. It was the place where, a little while before, Joan in an outburst of grief had said to a little group of children standing by: 'I have been sold and betrayed, and shall be given up to death. I beg of you to pray for me, for soon I shall no longer have any power to serve the king and the kingdom.' It was pitifully true, but she gave her last strength to help this creature she had crowned. She hastened to Compiègne; she raised a troop to help the craven king; and there, in a wild rush of battle, she was surrounded and betrayed, and dragged from her horse into the dust.

(And now we come to the saddest story since the day of Calvary.) There was not a hand in the world that was lifted for Joan. There was not a kind word that was said for her by anybody who had power. There was not a general among all those whom she had led to victory who sharpened his sword to help her. (Joan stood like One before outside Gethsemane—alone.) If there was a spark of chivalry left in France, it was helpless and dumb. The people of the towns she had delivered wept for her; the whole population of Tours walked barefoot through the

streets; but all official France was silent, while Paris lit its bonfires and sang the Te Deum in Notre Dame because Joan of Domremy was chained up in a cage.

Yes, they chained her in a cage. They sold her to the English, they put her in an iron cage at Rouen, they bound her to a pillar by her hands and feet and throat, and they set coarse soldiers to peep at her and mock her.

Think of old Rouen in those days—its quaint streets, its beautiful houses, and the majesty of its great cathedral—and picture everywhere a throng of swaggering men-at-arms, smug and comfortable priests, great men of the University of Paris, and bands of French traitors allied with the English invaders. They were there to hunt a girl to her death; they were there to fling the purest girl on earth to the most frightful fate they could think of.

(Not an Englishman breathing is there now who is not ashamed of this page in our past, but to the English Joan was at least an enemy; she had beaten them in battle, and flung them from their strongholds. If we thrill with shame at the thought of what Englishmen did at Rouen, what shall we say of Joan's own countrymen, who sold her to her enemies and sat by, idle and silent, while the hours of agony tolled slowly out for this fair maid of France?) (Since Judas sold his Master had been no more bitter day than this, when France sold its deliverer.)

They kept her in her cage six weeks, watched night and day by common men, so that she was never for a moment alone. They made openings in

the walls, through which she was spied on; they listened through crevices and keyholes for some word which might convict her; and then they dragged her to the chapel of the castle of Rouen, where sixty of the cleverest men in France confronted her.

37 They were her judges. The iron hand of the Church was over men in those days, and the Church was not what it is to-day. If you did not believe in it, and dared to say so, you were burned. In the centre of the judges sat the chief judge of all, the monster put there by the powerful Bishop of Winchester, who represented the English king. It was a clever trick to have Joan tried by her own countrymen, but it was foul play and not justice, and Bishop Cauchon, who conducted with a sort of glee this drawn-out torture of a peasant maid, was a selfish man who made himself a brute to get favour from his English masters. (He was trained, as all these men about him were, in all the tricks and traps of a theology in which they had smothered religion, and it was nothing to him that this girl before him was the purest girl in France.) He would chuckle, no doubt, to think that she was chained by one foot to a wooden beam by day and to the post of her bed by night. That was one of the pretty jests of this court of justice at Rouen.

(But Joan was equal to her Inquisition.) (She faced her judges with the calm of Socrates and with something of his skill in answering questions.) She held her own against them all, this girl fresh from her dungeon. She had loved the fields of France, she had striven to make its people free, yet this country

girl, stifled for months in a dungeon and set before the greatest judges in the land, stood before her judges brave and not confused. They tried to baffle her with inane questions about the saints, about their hair, and whether they wore crowns, and how they were dressed, and about their voices, but Joan would say that their voices were beautiful and humble and sweet, that she understood them well, and when they asked how the voices could speak without bodies she would say: 'I refer it to God.' (They pestered her about a thousand trifles—every trick of a petty cheap-jack lawyer these bullies tried. They called up every incident that could be remembered in her country life; they treated her as some foul criminal.) They accused her of vanity because once or twice she wore the beautiful robes the king gave her. She loved all lovely things, and these men so near to beasts thought it worth while to call it a sin for the Maid of Orleans to like fine clothes. They accused her of self-glory because she carried her own standard at Rheims, and Joan said, with great feeling and great pride: ('It had borne the burden; it had earned the honour!')

For six days the public trial continued, with Joan in chains by day and night, and it seemed as if opinion might change about this girl who was not to be frightened by all the priests and bullies that could come against her. (Once an Englishman cried out: 'Why was she not English, this brave girl?') But still no hand was raised for her, and Cauchon declared that he would examine her in secret in her cell. Perhaps he was ashamed to do his work in pub-

lic, but in public she appeared again, and again and again. She was pressed and trapped and reminded of the torture-chamber, but whenever she was asked to submit she would say: 'I can say no other thing to you,' or 'I refer to the answer I made, and to our Lord.' 'Do you hope to catch me in this way?' she would cry in the great hall to her sixty-three judges; and when at last they brought her to the torture-chamber the only thing she answered was: ('Truly, if you tear the limbs from my body I can say no other.') But there were only two in thirteen who would have tortured her body, and she was saved from that. It was the only cruelty she was saved from.

For three months the battle between Joan and her judges went on, and at last the decision arrived from the University of Paris, where the judges had gone to make up their minds. (It declared her to be murderous and blasphemous and cruel and lying, and it handed her over to the secular judge.) Nine men crowded into her chamber for a last appeal. If she would submit to the Church Joan might yet be saved. If she would say she was guilty of sin, if she would stoop down to the depths of these men, they would save her. If she would embrace the Church and abandon God, if she would sign this paper which said she was murderous and blasphemous and cruel and lying, they would not kill her.

Who would not like to have seen our proud Joan as she gave these nine men their answer? (She said to them that *if she were in judgment and saw the fire lighted, and the faggots burning and the executioner*

*ready to rake the fire, and she herself within the fire, she could say no more.*

3 We do not know what the nine men said to themselves, but one man in that cell had a touch of chivalry left. He was Gilbert Manchon, the clerk who took down the whole record of the trial of Joan. Many times he was lifted up with admiration at the courage of this brave prisoner. Once he refused to go with Cauchon to his secret questioning in Joan's chamber because it was not lawful. Once he wrote on his notes that the words put into the mouth of Joan were the opposite of what she had said.

4 And now, at this great scene in her chamber, Gilbert Manchon forgot once more that he was but a clerk and remembered only that he was a man, and he wrote down in the margin against Joan's final answer, 'Responsio superba'—the response superb, the proud answer of Joan.

5 Joan's year was ending; it was her last week on this earth. She waited for the voices, but they did not come, and her heart began to fail.

6 She must have thought of her home at Domremy and the great days at Orleans and Troyes and Rheims. She must have thought of those great ladies of the court who would sometimes stoop to kiss her cheek in their excitement. She must have thought of the generals who seemed so loyal to her in her triumphs. She must have thought with tears of the common people who wept with joy to welcome her, and the mothers who held their children forward to touch her white armour. (She would think of it all like a dream as she waited for the voices that



seemed to fail her now, and this heart that had never been untrue since it began to beat, this heart that had never been afraid since it first knew danger, began to fail.) (She seemed to hear the hum of a murmuring world talking of a witch who was to be led out to the fire, and one morning they led her to the scaffold.)

The great Winchester sat there, and the little Cauchon. There was a famous preacher to lecture Joan, and almost the last amazing thing we read of Joan is that she listened calmly to his preaching and interrupted only once—to defend the king from the insult of the preacher! Charles was base as base could be; he had deserted her though she delivered him; but still to Joan he was King of France, and she who had been captured in defending him stood by him on the scaffold from which he raised no hand to save her.

Once more they pressed her to submit. Did she not love her life? Would she not save the fire? Did she not love sweet liberty? Would she not trust the Church? 'Joan, why will you die?' the voices came from the crowd. 'Joan, will you not save yourself?' Her heart began to break. 'All that I did was for good, and it was well to do it,' she cried back; and at last, while still there was time, she cried: 'I refer everything to God and to the Pope.' But God was too far off from these men—from Cauchon, standing there with his two sentences written out: Imprisonment for life if she submitted; burning at the stake if she did not. They gave her papers and pressed her to sign, and in that last moment Joan

signed her name. Gilbert Manchon was there to make his record, and on the margin he put down these words: ('At the end of the sentence, Joan, fearing the fire, said she would obey the Church.')

9 Then they sent her, not to liberty, not to justice, but back into captivity, back to the watchmen and the spies, and they put above her signature papers that she had not signed. (These bishops put a lie above her name; these judges forged a confession.)

50 Joan found them out, and all her courage came anew. She scorned them all. She would not have their lies above her name. She had confessed no guilt, she told them; all she had done was in fear of the fire.

51 It was what they wanted. Cauchon laughed when he heard it. 'Make good cheer, the thing is done,' he cried with glee to a courtyard full of Englishmen. (Joan followed him—he to laugh and she to die.)

52 They came to her in the morning, and again her heart failed at the thought of the fire. 'My body, which has never been corrupted, must it be burned to ashes to-day?' she cried. 'Ah, I would rather be beheaded seven times than burned!' Eight hundred English soldiers followed the cart as it rumbled to the old market-place of Rouen, and it seemed impossible to Joan that the powers of the universe would not intervene. ('Rouen! Rouen!' she cried. 'Am I to die here?') They reached the platform, with the chairs and benches for the bishops who were to watch her burn and the pulpit for the preacher who was to lecture her. Over the platform they put

these lying words, which Winchester and Cauchon must have thought long over:

*Jeanne called the Maid, Liar, Abuser of the People, Soothsayer, Blasphemer of God, Pernicious, Superstitious, Idolatrous, Cruel, Dissolute, Invoker of Devils, Apostate, Schismatic, Heretic.*

54 (That was what these people said of Joan, and those who knew her to be what she was—the messenger of God upon the earth—said nothing.) She stepped on the platform and asked for a cross, but these bishops had not dared to bring a cross with them. (It is good to think that an English soldier standing by took a stick, broke it in two, and quickly made a cross; it is good to think that it was an Englishman who gave Joan, in that dread hour, the emblem of the only hope she had.) (She believed to the last that help would come. We are almost sure that her thoughts went back to the little church at Domremy where she first saw St. Michael on the windows, for she cried out from the depths of her heart: ‘St. Michael! St. Michael! St. Michael! Help!’ It was enough to break the heart of Winchester, and even Cauchon wept.)

55 Let us pass it over. The fire was lit. (Joan looked out through her tears for the last time on a world she had filled for ever with glory and pride, and the heart that had failed at the thought of all this was lifted up again by powers beyond this world.) She heard the voices in the fire. ‘My voices were of God,’ she cried; ‘they have not deceived me.’ (It

was the last thing she said before the brave Bishop of Winchester threw her ashes in the Seine.)

56 The executioner sought out a confessor and prayed to be forgiven. An Englishman who had sworn to add a faggot to the flames ran back with fear as he approached. A priest before the fire cried out: ('Would that my soul were where the soul of that woman is!') One of the secretaries of the King of England left the scene in great agitation, exclaiming: ('We are all lost, for we have burned a saint!') As for Charles the Base, who amused himself while Joan was burning, he did nothing; (but twenty years after, when they taunted him with receiving his throne from a witch, he had Joan tried again and found her innocent, and declared her great—to *save his dignity*, the dignity of such a thing as he.) But as for Gilbert Manchon, he 'never wept so much for anything that happened to himself, and for a whole month could not recover his calm,' and then, with the money he received for making the record, he bought a book of prayers that he might pray for her.

(That is the story of one who died at Rouen as One once died on Calvary.)

Arthur Mee

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

There came out of a log cabin in the backwoods of Kentucky, in the days when Napoleon was striding across Europe, a boy who was to do as great a thing as Alfred did when he shaped our land, as Julius Caesar did when he set Rome firmly on her foundations, as the Conqueror did when he came to Hastings and set Little Treasure Island on her way through a thousand years of noble history, as Cromwell did when he hurled Charles Stuart from his throne and saved our liberties.

For what this boy of Kentucky did was to save the greatest nation in the world from taking the wrong turning. He sat in the seat of George Washington and saw America at the parting of the ways; and but for him America would have gone the other way.

She would have been a shameless English-speaking race. She would have grown rich on gold ground out of poor men's bones. She would have been what Athens was without her glory, for Athens built on slavery an immortal realm of art, and America would have built on slavery only mountain heaps of gold.

It was Abraham Lincoln who found America in the crisis of her fate and saved her from an infamy

unequalled in the history of the world. He stands like a mountain peak, with the sunlight full upon him, and no record that can come to light can shame him. This lanky figure, more than six feet high, who taught himself all that he ever knew, and worked hard all his life, and then was murdered, was the noblest figure ever born on American soil, and in the annals of our English-speaking race no statesman has a prouder name.

His early life, Abraham Lincoln used to say, could all be put into one of the most famous lines of English poetry, 'The short and simple annals of the poor.'

He came on to the world's stage out of a queer and lowly home, and looking back now it is strange to reflect that this powerful man, laying down the path of life for millions unborn, should have come into life through such a poor back-door. His father was a shiftless carpenter, moving on and doing little; and his mother died when he was seven. All the schooling Abraham ever had was hardly worth counting; as likely as not, had we come across him as a boy in Kentucky or Indiana or New Orleans, we should have found him managing a ferryboat, or making rails for rustic fences, or working on a farm or behind the counter of a shop. In these ways Abraham Lincoln picked up such a living as he could; in little schools in backwood places he picked up such learning as he could.

A rough and curious world it must have seemed to this gaunt and most ungainly lad, with big, clumsy

hands, his head six-foot-four in the air, and a collection of queer creatures about him in which the most famous characters were whisky-drinkers and fighting-cocks. When, after his last migration down the Ohio River, his father came to cross the River of Time, Abraham wrote from his own home that it was not possible for him to visit his dying father, but that in any case an interview might have given both much pain. Hard and queer and sad it seems, but for millions life has always been like that; the happy half of the world has never known how the other half lives, and Lincoln came from the other half.

But he had in him that electric dynamo which we call earnestness. When he was settled in New Salem, as assistant in a shop, the customers would find him full-length on the counter with his head on a parcel of calico, reading a book on grammar which he could always borrow by walking a mile for it. He was determined to educate himself. When he had his one experience as a soldier, against an Indian chief who had led his warriors across the border into Illinois, he soon became a captain, and the one thing he did that is still remembered was to terrorise his men into setting free a poor Indian whom he found them hanging as a spy. He was determined to be human. When he started a store of his own and his partner died of drink and left Lincoln to pay the debts, he sacrificed himself for fifteen years to pay them off. He was determined to be honest. That was the sort of earnestness that thrilled through Abraham Lincoln. He came into the acutest controversy that could confront a statesman, but he came

into it as a plain man loving justice, determined to do right, loving his country too much to let it do wrong.

By a very hard road he came. He hampered himself with a store of his own, but in the end, with a millstone of debt about his neck, he hankered after something else; he seems to have wanted to be a blacksmith, but at length chose the law, deciding to take a partner and to stand for Parliament. He was elected to the State Legislature of Illinois at twenty-five, and went to live at Springfield, the capital of the State.

Little could the citizens of Springfield have thought that this tall young man walking through their streets would make Springfield famous for ever. In no sense did Lincoln at that time stand above his fellows. In one of his election speeches he had said :

Fellow-citizens, I presume you know who I am. I am plain Abraham Lincoln. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same.

And when he came to Springfield to take up a legal practice and his seat in Parliament Abraham Lincoln was too poor to buy a bed. It was characteristic of his courage that he should start in law and politics without a dollar at the bank. He went to a young shopkeeper named Joshua Speed, and his heart must have fallen when he found that Speed would want seventeen dollars to furnish Lincoln's needs. But the good man had a heart of gold. Taking Lincoln upstairs, he showed him his own bed, and offered him half of it. He said afterwards that never had he seen so gloomy a face as Abraham Lincoln's,



but he never regretted making him his bed-fellow; and we may hope the good Speed lived to see the day when Lincoln made his brother a Cabinet Minister.

It was Speed who helped Lincoln at another crisis in his life, when he made up his mind to get married. He seems to have been afraid; in any case, the wedding, which was fixed for New Year's Day in 1841, was stopped, and it was not till nearly the end of 1842 that Lincoln married Mary Todd of Kentucky. She was proud of him, more ambitious than he but he was not happy at home, and Lincoln sought peace in fitting himself for that great work for which he felt that God was calling him.

Slavery had been growing up since Washington. An invention for separating cotton from seed had increased the demand for cheap labour, and slaves were brought from Africa as fast as ships could carry them. They came in hundreds of thousands, and the cotton-fields of the southern States grew prosperous with their labour. The framers of the Constitution of America had been afraid to face the problem that was growing up about them even then. The cotton-planters of the South were growing rich, and were willing to declare that 'all men were created equal,' except their slaves, and for the sake of peace and quietness the fathers of America allowed slavery to continue while they passed a Constitution beginning with these words:

We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

And so the evil grew, and George Washington's problem was postponed for Abraham Lincoln to decide. The sapling that could have been easily bent had grown into a mighty oak. But it was the very age and spirit of the oak that drew out of Lincoln the power that was in him. He saw that if this tree were allowed to go on growing it would spread its branches everywhere, and keep the sunshine of liberty out of the garden of America. He made up his mind that slavery must grow no more on the soil of the United States. As a boy he had sailed down the Mississippi River as far as New Orleans, and there had seen a sale of slaves, where a mulatto girl was walked up and down the auction-room for the bidders to inspect as if she had been a horse. Abraham was there with two other lads, and one of them declared, in after-years, that it was in this auction-room that the iron ran into his soul against slavery, and Lincoln said: 'By God, boys, let's get away from this! If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard.'

He was to hit this thing so hard as to bring it clattering down like a house of cards, and yet the curious thing about Lincoln was that, while the moral crusaders against slavery were fighting with might and main, while William Lloyd Garrison was setting up his 'Abolitionist' and being dragged like a dog through the streets of Boston, while Mrs. Beecher Stowe was writing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and while old John Brown was being hanged for trying to rescue slaves, Lincoln was biding his time, seeming to take no interest in it all. This man, who was to bring

down slavery with a crash, stood quite aloof from all those who raged against it as a moral wrong. He showed no sympathy with the impassioned Abolitionists; when men like Emerson and Longfellow were alarmed by the boldness of slavery, Lincoln seemed unmoved, and he is said to have thought very little of an event which Longfellow thought to be the sowing of the wind to reap the whirlwind, and the beginning of a new revolution in the history of America.

Perhaps it would have been easier for Lincoln if he could have shared the passion of the Abolitionists, but we cannot be sure that it would have been better for America and the world, or better for the slaves. It is true that he felt the moral injustice of slavery, and that at times he seemed to be filled with great emotion as he thought of it. We read how 'reaching his hands towards the stars of that still night,' he once proclaimed of some poor slave woman that 'in some things she is certainly not my equal, but in her natural right to eat the bread she earns by the sweat of her brow she is the equal of any man.'

We read how at the first National Convention of the Republican Party all the reporters laid down their pens soon after Lincoln rose to speak, so enthralled were they, and 'the audience rose from their chairs, and with pale faces and quivering lips pressed unconsciously towards him.'

But the fact is that Lincoln did not catch the glow of a great crusade. He was a lonely man. For a whole generation he seems to have lived with no

intellectual company, and, except for Shakespeare and the Bible and Artemus Ward, who were nearly always with him, his mind had few companionships. He thought out fundamental problems for himself. He would take the bidding of no political party; he would wait till he saw in his mind that a thing was right, and then, though the heavens should fall, he would do it.

Once he said to a client: 'I can win your case, I can get you 600 dollars; I can also make an honest family miserable. But I shall not take your case, I shall not take your fee, and one piece of advice I give you gratis—go home and think if you can make 600 dollars in some honest way.' It was the same in politics; a great politician said of him that he could not cheat people out of their votes any more than he could cheat them out of their money. And so Lincoln, missing the glow that spurs on the crusader in a righteous cause, had the wonderful patience—and the gloom—of the lonely man. He was solemn and sad. Once, when he visited his old home, he told a friend afterwards that he walked about thinking 'till every sound appeared a knell, and every spot a grave;' and one of his favourite passages in his worn-out copy of Shakespeare was that tragic speech of Richard II:

For God's sake let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings.

He would suddenly break the silence by saying it aloud, and we shall see how, in the greatest hour of

his life, he was greatly moved by a tragic passage from Macbeth. He was a man of gloom and sadness, a lonely, melancholy man who was to be the supreme and central figure in surely the saddest human tragedy that this world has seen.

And so it was that he who was to lead the slaves into their Promised Land was no part of the popular movement in setting free the slaves. He probably never would have been an Abolitionist without the war. He was afraid of that way of ending an evil. He had said that 'if slavery is not wrong nothing is wrong,' and no power on earth could have made him say that slavery was right; but he had no sympathy for those who would end it by violent means. He wanted to get rid of it in a constitutional way. He believed that could be done, and he was willing to wait for it a hundred years if need be. He is said to have believed that it might take as long as that to extinguish slavery by the peaceful processes of law.

We have to remember this if we would form a right judgment about Lincoln and the Civil War. It is actually true that the war did not begin in order to free the slaves; the South might have kept the slaves they had and remained at peace. But the North was not willing for slavery to spread any farther, and Lincoln was determined to maintain a compromise that had been arrived at, according to which slavery should remain where it was and not be extended one single inch farther on the soil of the United States. On two things Lincoln was adamant: he meant that slavery should be

abolished in a constitutional way without war, but in no circumstances whatever should its territory be extended. It was to the second of these points that the South objected. They refused to agree that the same rights for slavery should be confined within limits. They claimed the same right for slavery as for liberty. One of their advocates said to an opponent: 'Oh, I see you are to push liberty as fast as you can, but we must be careful how we push slavery;' and he seems to have been surprised when the opponent answered that the position could not have been more neatly put.

If we ask on what ground the Civil War broke out, the reply must be that certain Southern States demanded the right to break away from the Union, and the Northern States refused to admit that right. The actual cause for which the war was fought, therefore, was as to whether individual States had the right to break away from the rest of the nation. All America knew that behind the demand for secession was the desire of the Southern States to extend slavery as they liked, but Lincoln's position was clear that he was fighting for the Union, and not on the question of slavery. If he could save the Union without freeing a single slave he would do it; he never failed to insist on that, but he never failed, also, to insist that he would not save the Union on terms that made it not worth saving. He would accept the state of things that then existed, the compromise with liberty that had come down from Washington, and would leave it for the certain influence of time to put things right. But beyond that he would never

go, even to save the Union, which was all in all to him. He would have no further compromise with liberty; he would not dishonour the principle for which the Union stood.

Lincoln was fifty on the eve of the greatest year of America's history. He had won a seat in the Illinois Legislature and had lost one in the Senate, and he may have lost it by a speech he made, in which he used these daring words:

A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half-slave and half-free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do not expect it to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other.

His friends, who knew what he was to say, expressed alarm at a speech so bold, but Lincoln declared that he would rather be defeated with this in his speech than be victorious without it. He put it in, and was defeated. That was in 1856, and four years later the delegates of the Republican party came to this plain man to stand for them as the sixteenth President of the United States. He stood and was elected. In his keeping were the lives and souls of a mighty multitude of men. It has been declared by military historians that the task undertaken by the Northern States was greater than Napoleon's in invading Russia. Then it must have been the most tremendous business an army ever had before it. Whether that is so or not, it can hardly be gainsaid that the decision imposed upon Lincoln was as

terrible and solemn a responsibility as has ever rested upon a human being. He was to condemn to death hundreds of thousands of his own countrymen at the hands of their brothers.

But there was more than that in the solemn task confronting Lincoln. This queer, gaunt, lanky man, knowing little of the world, with none of the cunning that counts so much in the make-up of a politician, had against him the whole passion of the South for the dearest right it had, the right to enslave human beings. It is astounding to remember now, but it is true, that throughout the Southern States rich and poor, preachers and teachers, young people and old, affectionate and gentle people, people who would shudder at the thought of cruelty and wrong, all went calmly to war in support of slavery.

The Southern States formed themselves into a separate Confederacy, and its Vice-President declared the policy of the new Government to be exactly the opposite of the old. 'Its foundations are laid,' he said; 'its corner-stone rests upon the great truth that the Negro is not the equal of the white man; that slavery is his natural condition. Our new Government is the first in the world based upon this great moral truth.' We see the intensity of the South; we see how time had hardened it and custom made it blind. The South was in terrible earnest; it felt that its very means of livelihood were struck at by the North, and it was ready for the war that it had brought about. It had no sense of the wrong of slavery. It had a keen and vivid sense that it was being humiliated and deprived of its freedom. Why



should the North, everlastingly protesting against slavery, attempt to enslave the South to a Constitution its people had outgrown?

It was this spirit that Lincoln had against him when, on February 11, 1861, he said farewell to his old neighbours at Springfield. He stood on the step of a railway-car, and gathered about him were the friends he had known since the days when he came to Springfield without a bed to sleep on or a dollar to buy one. None of them knew it, but he and his old friends were never to meet again.

Lincoln was sad. To that place and these people he owed everything, he said. There he had lived for a quarter of a century and had passed from a young to an old man; here his children had been born and one was buried; and now he left them not knowing when he might return or if he ever would, with a task in front of him greater than Washington's. Trusting in God, who would go with him and remain with them, and asking for their prayers, he bade them an affectionate farewell.

Greater indeed than Washington's task was his; he had to confront the nation of Washington cut in two. On the one side were those who found that the preservation of all their dignity and their means of livelihood was at stake; on the other hand were those who believed in the Union more than all, but could hardly be expected to be over-zealous to kill their brother because he wished to break away from them. It is true that feeling in the North was not so strong and high as in the South when the war began. Was it worth while, after all, to have a

State in the Union against its will, to fight a man to compel him to be a partner?

It is easy to see how difficult it must have been for Lincoln to control and guide one of these surging tides of feeling and to confront the other with all his strength. There was not even any tremendous enthusiasm for this man from Springfield, who was not yet a national figure, and had done nothing in particular. He was President but he had been elected by a minority of the people. He had a majority against him in both Houses of Parliament; a great majority of the judges of the Supreme Court disagreed with his views on the Constitution; and he had also the disadvantage that his party had never been in power before, and he was besieged by office-seekers.

Nor was his Cabinet the easiest a president ever had. He had not seen and did not know some of the men he had to invite into it, and the right-hand man on whom he was to lean through these dark years was disappointed that he was not President. At the very beginning William Seward sought to become director of the Government, and sent a remarkable letter to Lincoln which would have justified the President in bidding him farewell. Yet Lincoln trusted this man all his life and kept him by his side, and nobody saw this hostile letter till both men were dead.

The Civil War broke out and dragged through four dark years. It broke out at Fort Sumter in the South. Major Anderson was holding the fort for the

Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

With these noble words we may place side by side the Two-Minute Speech in the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, which was dedicated on November 18, 1863. An orator whose words were like a garden of gorgeous flowers had spoken for two hours, and before the crowd passed away the President was asked to say a word or two. The great oration has faded like the flowers that bloomed that afternoon, but the few words Abraham Lincoln spoke have passed into the glory of the world's inheritance. They had met, he said, to see whether a nation conceived in liberty and equality could long endure. They had come to dedicate that field as a resting-place for those who gave their lives that that nation might live. But it was not for them to dedicate that ground; the brave men who struggled there had consecrated it. And then Lincoln uttered these immortal words:

unfortunate things were done in Washington. It must have seemed at first to foreign eyes that the war was chiefly constitutional and Seward, who was Lincoln's Foreign Minister, did Lincoln the great disservice of explaining to foreign nations that no attack was meant on slavery. If no attack was meant on slavery the North could hardly look across to Europe for much sympathy.

Slowly it dawned on Lincoln's mind that the time would come for him to make it clear to all the world that behind the issue of the Union was the issue of this infamous business of the sale of human beings. Things went badly for the North, and after eighteen months the Southern armies had been winning all the time. Then, in September 1862, Lincoln called his Cabinet together, opened it with a chapter of Artemus Ward—to the great annoyance of those members of his Cabinet who did not like the humour of this man—and told his ministers that he had come to a great decision. He did not ask their opinion about it—he rarely asked it about anything—but he wanted to inform them what he was going to do.

Then this strange man went on to tell them all how, before the Battle of Antietam, he had gone on his knees in great perplexity and, like a little child, had promised that if victory were given to the North and the enemy driven from Maryland he would take it as a sign that he was to go forward and set free all the slaves. It is like a page from the life of Joan of Arc, but it is a page from the history of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet. It was God who had decided this

question in favour of the slaves, he told his colleagues, and he went on :

I said nothing to anyone, but I made the promise to my Maker. The rebel army is now driven out of Maryland, and I am going to fulfil my promise. I have got you together to hear what I have written down.

Then was signed the Great Emancipation; after eighteen months of defeat the North nailed the flag of Abolition to its mast, and the inner purpose of the war was made known to all mankind. The soil of the United States was dedicated to the liberty of all who lived on it, black or white—to all created equal.

A hundred thousand Negroes rallied to the North in the next twelve months, and it stirred Father Abraham, as they loved to call him, to think that when victory came there would be ' some black men who can remember that with silent tongue and clenched teeth and steady eye and well-poised bayonet they have helped mankind on to this great consummation.'

The tide began to turn, but the end was not in sight, or victory sure. It is not easy to keep soldiers fighting their own countrymen year after year; it is not easy to prevent disasters in the field, and all the unhappy consequences that must come; and, as if these troubles were not enough, the end of Lincoln's term of office was approaching. The time came for a new President, and the war was still dragging on after years of disaster and misery and death. A general who had been dismissed was chosen as a rival candi-

date; there was discontent among friends and foes; and a month or two before election time the party manager came to Lincoln and told him his election was hopeless.

It must have been the darkest hour of Lincoln's life. He had tried to keep the peace and had been driven into war; he had tried to fight on the question of the Union and been driven to free the slaves and clear the issue; he had prayed and prayed for victory and it would not come; and now he was to leave the stage of this great tragedy, his work undone, the nation torn asunder, and nothing sure.

It was August, and the election was in November, but he held office till March. On August 23 he took a piece of paper as he sat at a Cabinet meeting, wrote a resolution on it, folded it up, and passed it round to his ministers to endorse without reading it. Each man signed his name, trusting Lincoln, who sealed up the paper and put it away. Truly an astounding power had come to this amazing man.

And then, as if God intervened, there came great victories, and in a flash the situation changed. The election took place, and Lincoln stood again, but how low the fortunes of his party had fallen we judge from one truly pitiful fact. The Republicans had chosen for Vice-President, as fellow-candidate with Abraham Lincoln, a man named Andrew Johnson, an agitator, a creature of bitter hatred, a drunkard. But when the election was over it was found that Lincoln had not only won, but had won with a stupendous majority, and he was sworn in once more as seven-

teenth President of the United States, and Andrew Johnson was sworn in at his side—*drunk*.

This man the electors of America gave Lincoln as his constitutional companion; this man was to stand in Lincoln's place after the terrible night that was to come; and we can picture from this how sad and how dark had been the times through which Lincoln passed.

But the sun was shining now. Emerson wrote that never in history was so much at stake on a popular vote; and might was on the side of right. When he met his Cabinet again Lincoln took from his pocket the sealed paper on which his ministers had signed an unknown pledge. What they had signed was a pledge to support the President in case the Cabinet had only a few months to live. If that should happen, the new President could hardly be expected to save the Union, and Lincoln vowed that in the few months that would still remain to him between the Election and the Inauguration he would summon the co-operation of his successor in a solemn effort to crown the work of these four years. He vowed himself, that is, to save America from the tragic effects of a false choice.

It was not necessary, happily, to act on this dramatic pledge. On March 4, 1865, Lincoln took office for the second time, and made a speech which will live as long as his speech at Gettysburg, which means as long as any speech which has come down to us through time. This is how it closed after a great survey of those four years:

Government, and the South had threatened to storm it if he would not surrender. But, loth to start the war, Lincoln delayed the great decision till it was too late to reinforce the fort with men, and on April 12, 1861, Southern soldiers fired on Fort Sumter. On April 14 Anderson surrendered; he was to be away from the fort four years, and then, on this same day in 1865, he was to hoist once more the flag he now took down.

With the firing on the flag the North sprang to arms. The opening of the war may be compared with the opening of the European War. The South expected a quick and easy victory; it was said the Confederate flag would fly in Washington on May Day. The South was ready and the North was not. The South was keen; the North was not so sure. The South was eager to strike the blow; the North held back in the hope of peace. But though, like the Allies in Europe, the North came up slowly and late, she came up with resources inexhaustible, and she was to overcome the early advantage of the South.

It did not make it any easier for Lincoln that Europe seemed at times unfriendly to the North. It is not true to say that England was against the North, although some public men mistook the purpose of the war, and Mr. Gladstone made a tragic blunder in declaring that the South had created a new nation. The fact is that popular opinion in this country was on the side of the North as soon as it well understood the cause for which the South was fighting. If some unfortunate things were said, it was partly because



The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

We cannot be surprised that such a man, with the power of simplicity so eloquent within him, came to stand where Lincoln stood. We may say of Lincoln that he was *the* great American. His mind appears to have been prophetic of the future of America. Two stupendous moral prohibitions America has accomplished in two generations, and we are almost sure that Lincoln, had he lived, would have been largely responsible for both.

He gave his life to stop Slavery, but he said of Drink that it was a stronger bondage, a viler slavery, a greater tyranny still. He led America safely through the Civil War, but he said that if the grandeur of revolutions is reckoned by the amount of misery they alleviate and the little they cause, then the revolution that abolished Drink would be the noblest ever seen; and he craved for America the proud distinction of leading the world in that crusade. ‘What a noble ally is Prohibition to the cause of political freedom!’

he said. ' With such an aid its march cannot fail to be on and on, and when the victory shall be complete, when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth, how proud the title of that land which can claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both these revolutions! How nobly distinguished that people who shall have planted and nourished to maturity both the political and moral freedom of mankind.'

In his death as in his life Lincoln's country vindicates the wisdom of her great President, for we see America climbing, with Prohibition behind her, to the proud place of the leading nation of the earth, while her Motherland is spending on Drink enough to save her from the desperate financial consequences of the War.

Only a little while before his death Lincoln talked of the overthrow of Drink, and said to a friend: ' The next snarl we have to straighten out is the Liquor question; ' but that night the liquor traffic that he might have overthrown got hold of him, and there was still a saloon in Washington, when they flung Drink out of the State, which advertised that it was from there a drunken man set out to seek Lincoln on that terrible night.

Very soon now, a week or two after the second Inaugural, the sunshine of victory was to dawn for Lincoln and America. General Grant, Commander of the Northern Armies, wrote to Lincoln inviting him to the front. Something very great was going to happen, and Grant wanted Lincoln near. We read of him riding on horseback, a tall figure in a tall hat

and frock coat, chaffing an officer as they rode through mile after mile of cherry trees, his queer figure easily recognisable by enemy troops within shot.

We read of him, in those desperate hours, turning aside, with the chivalry that was born in him, to think of a farmer's boy. Exhausted by a long march, William Scott had done double guard to spare a comrade who was ill, and he fell asleep at his post. They sentenced him to death, and he was waiting for death when Lincoln heard of him. He went to see him. He talked with him about his home and his work on the farm. He picked up a picture of his mother, and then he put his hands on the boy's shoulders and said: 'My boy, you are not going to be shot. I am going to trust you. I am going to send you back to the regiment. But I have been put to a great deal of trouble on your account, and what I want to know is, How are you going to pay my bill?'

Snatched suddenly from death, the farm lad managed to count up the few assets he could rake together. He thought that with his Army pay, and a loan from his friends, and a mortgage on his father's farm, he might pay the bill if it did not come to over a hundred pounds. But it was much more than that, the President said. 'My bill is a large one. Your friends cannot pay it, nor your Army pay, nor the farm. There is only one man who can pay it, and his name is William Scott. If from this day William Scott does his duty so that when he comes to die he can look me in the face as he does

now, and say, "I have kept my promise, I have done my duty as a soldier," then my debt will be paid.'

William Scott promised, and he kept his word. He did his duty, was wounded, and died; but before he died he sent a message to Lincoln that he had tried to be a good soldier, and would have paid his debt in full if he had lived, but that he was dying thinking of Lincoln's kind face, thanking him for the chance he gave him to fall like a soldier in battle.

That was Abraham Lincoln through all the days of his life of care. It was said that he was not strong enough for war, and that he pardoned men because he could not bear to sign the death sentence. 'You do not know,' he said once to a friend, 'how hard it is to let a human being die when a stroke of your pen will save him.'

The long, long trial of the chivalry of Abraham Lincoln was coming to its end. On the night of Sunday, April 3, 1865, General Lee evacuated Richmond with his Southern armies, and it was plain that an immortal hour had come. Lincoln walked about hand in hand with his son Tad while Grant surrounded Lee.

It was the end, and Lee came to meet Grant at a farmhouse. Grant, an odd little figure at his best, whose faults we forgive for his heart of gold, came up all splashed with mud, sad at the downfall of a countryman who had fought so valiantly and long. They talked of old times, until it seemed that Grant had almost forgotten what they were met there for. Lee asked on what terms he might surrender, and Grant sat down and wrote them on the spot. His

eye fell on the handsome sword of Lee, and he added to his paper that every Southern officer should keep his sword. Lee was greatly moved, and dared to ask if they might keep their horses, too. Grant thought so; they would be badly wanted on the farms, he said.

The Civil War was over; the slaves were free; the United States was still united. Grant, without waiting to set foot in the conquered capital of the South, hurried away to see his boy at school; Lincoln came home by steamer with his boy. They started on April 8 for a happy two-days' voyage. Like a happy family party we are told it was. On the Sunday Lincoln took out his Shakespeare and read to them from Macbeth, and when he came to these solemn lines he paused and read them again:-

Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing  
Can touch him further.

On April 11 he was at White House again, and on April 14, which was Good Friday, General Anderson raised the flag once more at Fort Sumter, where he had taken it down four years before.

It was the day of days for Lincoln, and he spent much of it with his son Tad. At night they went to a theatre, and there, about ten o'clock, a wild man who had crept out of a public-house made his way into the box and shot Abraham Lincoln. They took him to a house near by, and he lay till after seven o'clock the next morning. Then this great and lonely

man, worn out with four of the saddest years through which man ever lived, entered on his rest. The door opened, and a faithful friend came out and said: 'Now he belongs to the ages.'

Walt Whitman dreamed of a ship that night, and this is what he wrote:

O Captain! my Captain! Our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weathered every rack,  
The prize we sought is won;  
The port is near, the bells I hear,  
The people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel,  
The vessel grim and daring;  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! Rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—  
For you the bugle trills:  
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths,  
For you the shore's a-crowding;  
For you they call, the swaying mass,  
Their eager faces turning:  
Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head;  
It is some dream that on the deck  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm,  
He has no pulse nor will,  
The ship is anchored safe and sound,  
Its voyage closed and done;

From fearful trip, the victor ship,  
Comes in with object won :  
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells !  
But I, with mournful tread,  
Walk the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

The Peace for which he waited long had come ;  
Lincoln was with Washington.

*Arthur Mee*







